Special Educational Need and Disability at Werneth School

Information report 2026-2027

Approved by:	Amy Pullar	**Date:** Autumn 2026
Last Reviewed		Autumn 2026
Next Review		Autumn 2027

Section 1: SEND Vision and Ethos

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

At Werneth School, we believe that every learner has the right to access an ambitious, inclusive and high-quality education. Our aim is not simply to provide support for pupils with SEND. Our aim is to **remove barriers; develop independence and ensure every learner can thrive at Werneth.**

Our SEND provision is built around one simple principle:

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

Effective SEND provision begins in the classroom. High-quality teaching, strong relationships, appropriate adaptation and a deep understanding of individual needs should be evident in **every lesson, every day**. Every member of staff has a responsibility for ensuring that pupils with SEND are understood, supported and challenged to achieve their potential. The SEND department provides specialist expertise, guidance and targeted provision, but **SEND is everyone's responsibility**.

Our approach is built around the values at the heart of Werneth:

RESPECT
We respect every learner as an individual. We recognise their strengths, understand their needs and listen to their voice. We create an environment where difference is understood, inclusion is valued and every pupil feels that they belong.

HARD WORKING
We believe in high expectations for every learner. We work hard to identify and remove barriers to learning, and we expect our pupils to work hard, develop resilience and take increasing ownership of their learning and independence.

GOOD COMMUNICATION
We believe that effective SEND provision depends on everyone communicating well. Staff, pupils, parents, carers and external professionals work together to understand need, share information and identify the best way forward for each learner.

Our SEND approach is therefore built on five key principles:

- **Every learner is known** — we understand individual strengths, needs, barriers and aspirations.
- **Every learner is valued** — SEND does not define a pupil or limit what they can achieve.
- **Every lesson is inclusive** — pupils with SEND receive appropriate adaptation and support.
- **Every day matters** — consistency of provision and relationships make a difference to outcomes.
- **Every learner makes progress** — we monitor the impact of provision and adapt our approach.

Our commitment

Every Learner.
Every pupil is known, valued and supported to achieve their potential.

Every Lesson.
Every classroom provides ambitious, inclusive and responsive teaching.

Every Day.
Every interaction, decision and intervention contribute towards better outcomes, greater independence and improved life chances

2: What We Mean by SEND

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

Definition of SEND

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as someone who has a physical disability or Special Educational Needs (SEN) impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. This would include people who have:

- sensory impairments
- learning disabilities
- communication difficulties
- physical impairment
- a chronic or life limiting condition
- complex health care needs

At Werneth, we recognise that SEND is about more than a diagnosis, a label or a pupil's attainment. It is about understanding the individual learner, identifying the barriers they experience and providing the right support to enable them to succeed.

Not every pupil who experiences a barrier to learning will have SEND. Pupils may experience additional needs or barriers for a range of reasons, including changes in circumstances, attendance, emotional wellbeing, gaps in prior learning, language development or other factors. These pupils may require additional support without necessarily having a special educational need. Equally, a pupil may have SEND **without having a formal diagnosis**. At Werneth, we distinguish between:

Diagnosis

A formal identification of a particular condition or need by an appropriately qualified professional. A diagnosis can help us understand a pupil's profile and may provide useful recommendations for support.

SEND

A special educational need that requires special educational provision to be made because a pupil has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, or a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided.

Additional support needs and barriers to learning

Factors that may affect a pupil's ability to access learning or make progress, but which do not necessarily meet the definition of SEND.

A Diagnosis Is Not the Starting Point

At Werneth, we do not wait for a diagnosis before responding to a pupil's needs. A diagnosis can provide valuable information and help us understand a pupil's profile, but **the absence of a diagnosis should never be a barrier to appropriate support**.

Our starting point is always:

What does this learner need in order to access learning, make progress and achieve their potential?

We use evidence from classroom practice, assessment, pupil voice, parent and carer information and professional advice to build an understanding of need and determine appropriate provision.

This reflects our commitment to **Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.**

SEND should not be viewed solely through the lens of academic attainment. **Success for a pupil with SEND is not simply measured by the grades they achieve, but by the progress they make towards their own potential and future aspirations.**

Our ambition is for every learner to develop academically, socially, emotionally and personally and to leave Werneth equipped for their next stage of education, employment, independence and adult life.

We therefore consider:

- Academic progress
- Communication and interaction
- Social and emotional development
- Independence
- Confidence and self-advocacy
- Engagement and participation
- Personal development
- Preparation for adulthood
- Individual aspirations

Strengths, Needs and Aspirations

We take a **strengths-based approach** to SEND.

This means that we do not define pupils by their diagnosis, difficulty or area of need. We seek to understand the whole learner. We ask:

What are this pupil's strengths?
What are they interested in?
What are their aspirations?
How do they learn best?
What barriers are preventing them from succeeding?
What support will enable them to become more independent?

Understanding strengths is not about ignoring areas of difficulty. It allows us to build provision around what a pupil **can do**, while addressing the barriers that prevent them from doing more. This reflects **Respect** — recognising the individual — and **Hard Working** — supporting every learner to develop their potential.

Why Identification Matters

Early and accurate identification allows us to understand a pupil's needs before barriers become entrenched.

Effective identification enables us to:

- Understand the individual pupil
- Identify barriers to learning
- Adapt teaching and provision
- Put appropriate support in place
- Monitor progress and impact
- Work collaboratively with pupils and families
- Seek specialist advice where appropriate
- Develop independence
- Support future aspirations

Identification should therefore lead to **action, not simply a label**. Good identification also depends on **Good Communication**. Staff must share relevant information, listen to pupils and families and work collaboratively to build a complete picture of the learner.

Identify the Barrier, Not Just the Label

A diagnosis or category of need can help us understand a pupil, but it does not tell us everything about how that pupil learns. Two pupils with the same diagnosis may have completely different strengths, needs and barriers.

Our question should therefore not simply be:

"What is the pupil's diagnosis?"

Instead, we ask:

"What is the barrier, what does the pupil need, and what can we do about it?"

This ensures that our SEND provision remains **individualised, purposeful and focused on impact**.

High Expectations for Every Learner

Having SEND does not mean having lower expectations. At Werneth, we maintain ambitious expectations for all pupils while recognising that **the route to success may look different for different learners**. We adapt teaching, remove unnecessary barriers and provide appropriate support without unnecessarily reducing challenge, independence or opportunity.

We expect every learner to:

- Be treated with **Respect**
- Be **Hard Working** in pursuit of their goals
- Develop **Good Communication** skills and confidence
- Take increasing ownership of their learning
- Develop independence
- Believe in their capacity to succeed
- Work towards their individual aspirations

Our role is not to lower the destination because a learner faces barriers. **Our role is to identify the barriers and help them find the route around them. We don't define pupils by what they find difficult. We identify what they need, build on what they can do and help them move towards what they aspire to become.**

3. The Four Broad Areas of Need

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of special educational need:

1. **Communication and Interaction**
2. **Cognition and Learning**
3. **Social, Emotional and Mental Health**
4. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs**

At Werneth, these four areas provide a framework for understanding and discussing need. They are **not four separate boxes into which pupils should be placed**. SEND needs frequently cross and interact across different areas. A learner may have needs in more than one area, and the way those needs present may change over time. For example, difficulties with understanding language may affect a learner's ability to access learning, which may lead to frustration, anxiety or disengagement. Similarly, gaps in foundational knowledge may affect confidence and increase anxiety about entering the classroom.

We therefore consider the **whole learner**, rather than focusing solely on a diagnosis or primary area of need. **The four areas of need help us understand the learner; they do not define the learner.** This reflects our Werneth values of **Respect, Hard Working and Good Communication**, and our commitment to:

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

3.1 Communication and Interaction

Communication and Interaction needs can affect how a learner understands, processes and communicates information, as well as how they interact with others.

At Werneth, common needs within this area include:

- Autism
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)
- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Social communication needs
- Difficulties understanding spoken language
- Difficulties processing and responding to language

A learner may experience difficulty understanding what a question is asking, interpreting the language used by a teacher, following a sequence of instructions or understanding the expectations of a particular situation. These difficulties are not always immediately visible.

A pupil may appear to be:

- Not listening
- Not following instructions
- Refusing to complete work
- Avoiding participation
- Disengaging from a lesson
- Becoming frustrated
- Leaving the classroom
- Becoming dysregulated

However, the underlying barrier may be that the learner **does not fully understand what is being communicated or what is expected of them**.
Our approach

At Werneth, we seek to understand the communication barrier before interpreting the behaviour.

We ask:

What has the learner understood?
What have we communicated?
What might be getting in the way?

Our classroom strategies for speech, language and communication will align with Werneth's whole-school approach and the priorities identified through the **SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (OAIP)**.

We recognise that adapting communication is not about lowering expectations. It is about ensuring that learners can understand what is expected of them and have the opportunity to demonstrate what they know.

3.2 Cognition and Learning

Cognition and Learning needs affect how a learner acquires, processes, retains and applies information.

At Werneth, cognition and learning needs are common and may include:

- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dyspraxia/DCD
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Working memory difficulties
- Processing difficulties
- Literacy difficulties
- Numeracy difficulties
- Moderate Learning Difficulties
- Executive functioning difficulties
- Gaps in foundational knowledge and skills

We recognise that difficulties in learning can become increasingly significant when learners lose the **pace, content and flow of the curriculum**. When foundational knowledge and key concepts are not secure, learners may increasingly struggle to access new learning. This can affect confidence, participation and their willingness to enter or engage with lessons.

Over time, this may contribute to:

- Increased cognitive load
- Reduced confidence
- Frustration
- Avoidance
- Anxiety
- Disengagement
- A widening gap between the learner and their peers

Our approach

At Werneth, we do not simply ask:

"Why can't this pupil do the work?"

We ask:

"What knowledge or skill is missing?"
"What is preventing the learner from accessing this concept?"
"What needs to be explicitly taught, revisited or scaffolded?"
"How can we help the learner become increasingly independent?"

Our approach will align with Werneth's whole-school teaching and learning strategy, ensuring that SEND provision strengthens rather than sits separately from high-quality classroom practice. We recognise that supporting a learner with cognition and learning needs is not about continually reducing the level of challenge. It is about identifying the precise barrier and providing the appropriate support to enable the learner to access ambitious learning.

3.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs can affect a learner's emotional wellbeing, regulation, relationships, engagement and ability to access learning.

SEMH needs can present in many different ways and may include:

- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Difficulties with emotional regulation
- Difficulties managing relationships
- Trauma-related responses
- Emotional distress
- Difficulties with attention and regulation
- Avoidance or disengagement
- Behaviour that communicates an unmet need

At Werneth, we recognise that:

Behaviour is communication.

A learner who is refusing work, becoming dysregulated, avoiding a lesson or leaving the classroom may be communicating that something is difficult, overwhelming or inaccessible.

This does not mean that expectations or boundaries are removed.

Instead, we seek to understand the **function of the behaviour and the barrier to learning**, while maintaining high expectations and supporting the learner to develop more successful ways of communicating and regulating.

Our approach

We consider:

What is the learner communicating?
What is the barrier?
What support is needed?
What can we teach the learner to help them manage this more independently?

Our SEMH approach is relational, consistent and focused on helping pupils develop the skills they need to access learning and participate successfully in school.

3.4 Sensory and/or Physical Needs

Sensory and/or Physical needs can affect a learner's ability to access the physical environment, process sensory information or participate fully in learning.

At Werneth, this may include learners with:

- Hearing impairment
- Visual impairment
- Sensory processing difficulties
- Physical disabilities
- Fine and gross motor difficulties
- Medical needs
- Other physical or sensory needs that affect access to education

We recognise that sensory and physical needs may be visible or invisible and that their impact can vary considerably between learners.

Two pupils with the same sensory or physical need may require very different adaptations.

Our approach

We seek to understand:

What is the learner experiencing?
What environmental or physical barriers are present?
What adaptations are required?
How can we maintain participation, challenge and independence?

4. Identification, Assessment & Monitoring

Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

At Werneth School, we believe that effective SEND provision begins with **accurate identification of need**. Our approach is not based on identifying what is *wrong* with a learner or relying solely on a diagnosis. Instead, we seek to understand:
What is preventing this learner from accessing, participating in or making progress within their education, and what can we do to remove or reduce that barrier?

4.1 Identification of Need

Identification of SEND is a **shared responsibility**.
Concerns may be identified through:

- transition information
- previous school records
- baseline assessment
- subject assessment
- classroom observation
- progress data
- attendance and engagement
- behaviour or regulation patterns
- communication difficulties
- literacy or numeracy difficulties
- pupil voice
- parent/carer information
- existing professional advice
- concerns raised by staff
- changes in a learner's presentation or access to learning

Identification should focus on **patterns of need and functional impact**, rather than isolated incidents. A learner does not need to have a diagnosis in order to receive additional support. Equally, a diagnosis does not automatically determine the provision a learner requires.
The need determines the provision — not the label.

4.2 Identifying the Barrier

When a concern is raised, staff should move beyond:
"*What is wrong?*"
and instead ask:
'What is the barrier to learning?'
For example:

Instead of…	**We ask…**
"They have ADHD."	"What is preventing them from accessing this lesson?"
"They have dyslexia."	"What specific literacy barrier is affecting their learning?"
"They don't listen."	"Are they able to process and retain the instruction?"
"They are low ability."	"Which foundational skills are insecure?"
"They are anxious."	"What is creating the barrier to participation?"
"They have poor behaviour."	"What is happening immediately before the behaviour and what is the learner communicating?"

This prevents SEND identification becoming a process of **labelling learners rather than understanding them**.

4.3 Assessment Before Intervention

Additional provision should have a **clear purpose**. Before targeted intervention is introduced, the school should establish:

What is the identified need?

What specific difficulty has been identified?

What is the barrier?

How is that difficulty affecting access, participation, progress or independence?

What is the baseline?

What can the learner currently do independently?

What does the learner need to be able to do?

What is the intended outcome?

What evidence supports the decision?

Assessment, observation, work samples, pupil voice, parent/carer information and/or professional advice should be considered as appropriate.

4.4 Baseline Assessment

Every targeted or specialist intervention must begin with a **clear baseline**.
The baseline establishes the learner's starting point and enables the school to determine whether provision has made a measurable difference.
A baseline may include:

- standardised assessment
- curriculum assessment
- reading age
- spelling assessment
- reading fluency
- numeracy assessment
- communication assessment
- work sample
- behaviour frequency
- attendance or lesson-access data

4.5 Targeted Assessment

Where appropriate, Werneth will use **specific diagnostic or baseline assessments** to identify the underlying area of difficulty.
For example:

Cognition & Learning

- Reading accuracy
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Spelling
- Written expression
- Number knowledge

Communication & Interaction

- Understanding language
- Expressive language
- Vocabulary
- Following instructions
- Social communication
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SEMH

- Regulation
- Engagement
- Attendance/lesson access
- Emotional literacy
- Relationships
- Independence

Sensory & Physical

- Access to written information
- Visual/auditory access
- Physical access
- Fine motor skills
- Fatigue or sensory barriers

Assessment should always be used to **inform provision**, rather than simply to collect data.

4.6 The Asses → Plan → Do → Review Cycle

Werneth will use a clear graduated cycle each term:

ASSESS

Identify the need and establish the barrier.
↓

PLAN

Determine the intended outcome and agree the provision required.
↓

DO

Deliver the agreed provision consistently and record implementation.
↓

REVIEW

Measure impact and determine the next step.
The review decision should be one of four clear outcomes:

EXIT

The intended outcome has been achieved and the learner can access learning through the ordinarily available inclusive provision.

CONTINUE

The provision is having a positive impact and further intervention is justified.

ADAPT

The learner has made insufficient progress and the provision needs to change.

ESCALATE

The learner continues to experience significant barriers despite appropriate provision and requires further assessment, specialist advice or a higher level of support.

5.7 Measuring Impact

At Werneth, **provision is only meaningful if we can evaluate its impact**. Every targeted intervention should therefore have:

Baseline → Intended outcome → Review measure → Decision

Impact should not be measured solely through whether a learner:

- enjoyed the intervention
- attended the intervention
- appeared more confident
- completed the activities

These may be useful observations, but they do not demonstrate whether the **identified barrier has reduced**.

4.8 Review and Decision Making

Every targeted provision should have a **defined review point**.
The review should consider:

1. Has the provision been delivered as planned?
2. Has the learner made measurable progress?
3. Has the identified barrier reduced?
4. Can the learner now demonstrate the skill independently?
5. Has the skill transferred into normal classroom learning?
6. Can the learner's needs now be met through ordinarily available inclusive provision?
7. Is further or different provision required?

The review should result in a clear decision:
Exit | Continue | Adapt | Escalate
A learner should not remain on intervention simply because they have always received it.

4.9 Pupil and Parent/Carer Voice

Assessment is strongest when it combines **professional evidence with the experience of the learner**. Pupil and parent/carer voice should **inform decision making**, alongside assessment and professional evidence.
Learners should be supported to understand:

- what they find difficult
- what helps them
- what they are working towards
- what progress they have made
- what they would like to achieve

Parents and carers provide valuable information about:

- strengths
- needs
- changes over time
- strategies that work
- experiences outside school
- aspirations for their child

4.10 Professional Collaboration

SEND identification and assessment should draw on the expertise of the wider school team.
Where appropriate, this may include:

- subject teachers
- form tutors
- SEND staff
- pastoral staff
- attendance staff
- safeguarding staff
- HLTAs/TAs
- senior leaders
- external professionals
- parents/carers

Where a learner presents with needs across multiple areas, these should be considered **holistically**.
SEND needs do not exist in isolated categories.
A learner may experience communication, cognition and learning, SEMH and sensory/physical needs simultaneously. Assessment should therefore consider the **whole learner and the interaction between their needs**.

4.11 Specialist Assessment and Escalation

Where targeted provision has been appropriately delivered but significant barriers remain, further assessment or specialist advice may be required.
Escalation should be based on evidence that:

- the need is persistent
- the barrier is significant
- appropriate provision has been implemented
- progress remains limited
- the learner continues to experience substantial difficulty accessing learning

Possible next steps may include:

- further SENDCo assessment
- consultation with specialist staff
- referral to external agencies
- advice from relevant professionals
- consideration of additional assessment
- review of existing provision
- consideration of statutory assessment where appropriate

A referral should be evidence-led rather than diagnosis-led

5. Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision

The foundation of inclusion at Werneth School

At Werneth School, **Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP)** is the foundation of our approach to inclusion. OAIP describes the inclusive practice, adaptations and support that should be available to **all learners as part of everyday school life**. Stockport Council describes OAIP as the universal, basic level of support that all pupils should receive in mainstream settings, recognising that most needs can be met through universal provision, high-quality teaching and reasonable adjustments.
OAIP is therefore **not an intervention, a SEND-only offer or something that is added when a pupil is identified as having SEND**. It is the starting point for every learner. Every Learner. Every Lesson. Every Day.

What does OAIP mean in practice?

OAIP means that staff anticipate that learners will have different strengths, experiences and barriers to learning and plan accordingly. It recognises that **what is accessible for one learner may not be accessible for another**.
Inclusive practice may therefore include:

- clear and explicit instruction
- accessible language and communication
- appropriate scaffolding
- modelling and worked examples
- breaking complex tasks into manageable steps
- checking understanding
- explicit teaching of vocabulary
- appropriate use of visual information
- opportunities to rehearse and retrieve learning
- appropriate adaptations to resources
- consideration of sensory and physical access
- support for organisation and independence
- predictable routines
- appropriate support for regulation and engagement
- reasonable adjustments where required

These approaches should be embedded within normal teaching and school routines rather than being dependent upon a learner having a diagnosis or being placed on the SEND register. The Greater Manchester OAIP describes this principle as approaches that are **beneficial for all, essential for some and detrimental to none**.

OAIP is everyone's responsibility and is not the responsibility of the SEND department alone.
Teachers, support staff, pastoral staff, leaders and all adults working with learners have a role in creating an inclusive environment.
The SEND department's role is to:

- develop and communicate the school's inclusive approach
- provide expertise and advice
- identify patterns of need
- support staff understanding
- coordinate targeted and specialist provision
- monitor the effectiveness of additional support
- work with families and external professionals where appropriate
- ensure that targeted provision builds upon, rather than replaces, inclusive classroom practice

OAIP is the starting point, not the finishing point

For many learners, OAIP will be sufficient to remove or reduce barriers to learning. Where a learner continues to experience a **significant and persistent barrier despite appropriate ordinarily available provision**, further assessment may be required.
This creates a clear graduated approach:

OAIP

Inclusive provision for all
↓

Targeted

Additional, specific provision for an identified barrier
↓

Specialist

Highly personalised provision and/or specialist professional involvement
Stockport's graduated approach similarly distinguishes universal OAIP from targeted SEN support and more personalised support where a learner's needs cannot be met through universal provision alone.
Importantly, moving to targeted or specialist provision **does not mean OAIP stops**.
OAIP remains at the heart of everything we do.
The following pages translate the OAIP into **practical, accessible guidance for staff**.
The posters are organised around the four broad areas of SEND:
Communication & Interaction
Cognition & Learning
Social, Emotional & Mental Health
Sensory & Physical
They are designed to help staff answer three simple questions:

What might I notice?

Recognising potential barriers without making assumptions or diagnosing.

What can I do?

Identifying inclusive strategies that can be incorporated into everyday practice.

When might more support be needed?

Recognising when a learner may require assessment, targeted provision or specialist advice. The areas of need should **never be viewed as isolated categories**. Learners may experience needs across multiple areas, and the presentation of SEND will be different for every individual. Our focus remains on the **learner, their strengths, their aspirations and the barrier they are experiencing**, rather than the label attached to them.

6. **What training have Werneth staff had to support our students with SEND?**

Our SENDCo Amy Pullar has 7 years teaching experience at Werneth School. Amy holds a degree in History, a Masters in Language and Literacy and her NPQLT. Amy has taught 5 curriculum areas and for the last three years has worked within SEND as transition and KS3 SEND Lead.

At Werneth our staffing structure within the department can be found below:

SENDCo	**Amy Pullar** **Amy.pullar@wernethschool.com**
HTLA SEMH	Jennie Wolstenholme
HTLA Cognition and Learning Lead	Suzie Miller
HTLA EAL Lead	Vas Karagiannis
HTLA Communication and Interaction Lead	Cassandra Bardsley
SEMH mentor	Ruth Craven
TA SEMH	Tamyra Garlick
TA Sensory and Physical	
TA Cognition and Learning	Abi Roberts
TA Communication and interaction	
TA Year 7 Transition	Kerry Carter
TA Year 7 Transition	Leanne Voss