



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES POLICY

Poplar Farm School

Academic year 2026-27

Our commitment

Poplar Farm is a mainstream school committed to inclusive education. We aim to identify needs early, remove barriers to learning and participation, make reasonable adjustments and provide high-quality teaching and appropriate additional or specialist provision so that pupils with SEND can achieve, belong and thrive.

Policy information

Policy owner	SENDCO / Headteacher
Senior SENDCO	Mrs Rowntree
SENDCO	Mr Goodchild
Approval	Local School Board
Review cycle	Annual
Reviewed	September 2026
Next review	September 2027

1. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

This policy sets out Poplar Farm Primary School's approach to identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), and the responsibilities of staff and the Local School Board.

Statutory framework

The policy has regard to the current statutory framework and guidance applicable to schools in England, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014 and associated SEND Regulations.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance).
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments.
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - current statutory guidance remains in force.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 where relevant to school duties.
- Current DfE guidance on allergy safety in schools.

2026 SEND reform context

The government published 'Every child achieving and thriving' and consulted on wider SEND reforms during 2026. At the date of this policy, the existing SEND Code of Practice and current statutory SEND framework remain the basis for the school's duties. Poplar Farm will review this policy if new statutory requirements come into force.

Definition of SEND

A child or young person has SEND where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. For a compulsory-school-age child, this includes having a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or a disability that prevents or hinders use of educational facilities generally provided for others of the same age.

Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for pupils of the same age. A diagnosis alone does not determine whether a pupil requires SEN Support.

2. VISION, VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Our vision for SEND

Every pupil is unique and entitled to a broad, balanced, ambitious and relevant education. We recognise and value difference, maintain high expectations and seek to ensure that pupils with SEND participate meaningfully in the academic, social and wider life of the school.

Inclusion We maximise participation and belonging and minimise avoidable exclusion from learning, relationships and school life.	High-quality teaching The starting point for every pupil is inclusive, adaptive, high-quality teaching. Teachers remain responsible for the progress of pupils with SEND.
Early identification We respond to emerging needs promptly, drawing on pupil, family and professional evidence rather than waiting for a diagnosis.	Participation Children and their parents/carers are treated with respect and their views are integral to assessment, planning, review and transition.
Independence Support should build communication, confidence, self-regulation, independence and preparation for the next stage of education and adulthood.	Whole-school responsibility All teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND. Inclusion is the responsibility of leaders, teachers, support staff and the Local School Board.

Aims

- Identify pupils' needs as early and accurately as possible.
- Provide appropriate reasonable adjustments and provision matched to assessed need.
- Use the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle to evaluate impact and adapt provision.
- Work in genuine partnership with pupils, parents/carers and external professionals.
- Ensure pupils with SEND access an ambitious curriculum and the wider life of the school.
- Develop staff expertise and deploy additional adults in ways that improve access, learning and independence.

3. THE FOUR BROAD AREAS OF SEND

Broad area	What this may include
Communication and Interaction	Needs may include speech, language and communication needs, developmental language differences and social communication needs, including needs associated with autism.
Cognition and Learning	Needs may include moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyscalculia.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	Needs may present through difficulties with emotional regulation, relationships, anxiety, attention, engagement or behaviour. We seek to understand the underlying need rather than treating behaviour alone as SEND.
Sensory and/or Physical	Needs may include physical disability, visual impairment, hearing impairment, multi-sensory impairment and sensory or motor needs that affect access to learning.
Needs do not fit into boxes	
The four broad areas are used to support planning, not to label children. A pupil may have needs across more than one area, and needs can change over time. Provision is based on the individual child.	

What is not automatically SEND?

Slow progress or low attainment does not automatically mean that a pupil has SEND. Equally, attainment in line with age-related expectations does not rule out SEND. Difficulties linked primarily to attendance, English as an additional language, or other contextual factors must be considered carefully alongside the whole child's needs.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Local School Board Ensures statutory duties are met; monitors SEND provision and policy; promotes inclusion; ensures leaders are held to account for the quality and impact of provision.	Headteacher - Mrs Hodson Has overall responsibility for SEND provision, school improvement and ensuring appropriate resources, staffing and systems are in place.
Senior SENDCO - Mrs Rowntree Leads day-to-day SEND provision, maintains oversight of the SEND Register, advises staff, coordinates provision, liaises with families and external professionals, supports EHCP processes and annual reviews.	SENDCO - Mr Goodchild Works collaboratively to support SEND provision, identification, monitoring ISP's, ICP's, staff development and communication.
Class teachers Are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of every pupil in their class, including pupils supported by teaching assistants or specialist staff.	Subject leaders Promote accessible curriculum design, monitor SEND participation and progress in their subjects, and support colleagues to adapt teaching effectively.
Teaching assistants Support access, learning, communication and independence; deliver agreed interventions; provide feedback to teachers, contribute to review without replacing teacher responsibility.	All staff Promote inclusion, make reasonable adjustments, follow pupil plans and safeguarding procedures, and engage in relevant SEND professional development.

Deployment of additional adults

Adult support is planned to increase access, participation and independence. The school avoids unnecessary dependence on 1:1 support and reviews whether deployment is having the intended impact.

5. IDENTIFICATION AND THE GRADUATED APPROACH

Identification

- Concerns may be raised by a pupil, parent/carers, teacher, teaching assistant, SENDCO team or external professional.
- Teachers monitor progress, attainment, engagement, attendance, communication, wellbeing and participation from the pupil's starting point.
- Where concerns arise, the class teacher discusses them with parents/carers and considers the pupil's previous provision and wider context.
- Reasonable adjustments and ordinarily available provision are implemented and reviewed before, and alongside, consideration of SEND Support.
- Where evidence indicates that the pupil requires provision additional to or different from that ordinarily available, the pupil may be placed on the SEND Register in consultation with parents/carers.

Assess - Plan - Do - Review

Stage	What happens
ASSESS	Analyse strengths, needs, barriers, progress and the impact of existing strategies. Use pupil and parent views, teacher assessment, observation and specialist advice where appropriate.
PLAN	Agree outcomes, small-step targets, provision, adjustments, resources, responsibilities and how impact will be measured. Parents/carers and the pupil are involved.
DO	The class teacher remains responsible for the pupil's learning. Agreed strategies and interventions are implemented, with support from teaching assistants and specialists where required.
REVIEW	Evaluate progress and the impact of support. Decide with the pupil and family whether provision should continue, change, increase, reduce or cease.
The Poplar Farm SEND Pathway	
The school's SEND Pathway supports consistent decision-making from quality-first teaching and monitoring through SEND Support, external professional involvement and, where evidence indicates, consideration of an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.	

6. SEND SUPPORT, ISPS AND THE SEND REGISTER

SEND Support

SEND Support is provided where a pupil needs special educational provision that is additional to or different from the provision ordinarily available. Support is personalised and proportionate to need.

Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

- ISPs identify a small number of priority outcomes or targets and the provision required.
- Targets should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound where appropriate.
- ISPs are written and updated by the class teacher with SENDCO oversight and pupil/parent involvement.
- At Poplar Farm, ISPs are reviewed three times per year, with provision adjusted according to evidence of impact.

SEND Register

The SENDCO team maintains the school's SEND Register and reviews it alongside the school's assessment and provision systems. Placement on the register is not dependent on a diagnosis.

Exiting SEND Support

A pupil may be removed from the SEND Register when evidence shows that they no longer require special educational provision that is additional to or different from ordinarily available provision. This decision is discussed with the pupil and parents/carers. The pupil may continue to receive reasonable adjustments and will be monitored.

Progress is broader than attainment

When reviewing SEND provision, Poplar Farm considers academic progress alongside communication, engagement, independence, relationships, emotional regulation, participation, attendance and wellbeing where relevant to the pupil's needs.

7. CURRICULUM, TEACHING AND INTERVENTION

Pupils with SEND are entitled to an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum. Curriculum access is planned from the pupil's strengths, needs, age and stage of development.

- Teachers adapt explanations, modelling, task design, resources, grouping, environment and methods of recording.
- Pre-teaching, overlearning, retrieval, visual supports, concrete resources, communication supports and assistive technology may be used according to need.
- Targeted interventions are selected because assessment identifies a specific barrier or outcome; they are not used as a substitute for access to high-quality classroom teaching.
- Where a pupil requires learning at an earlier developmental stage, provision may include practical, sensory and play-based learning as part of a personalised curriculum.
- Alternative or adapted curriculum arrangements are reviewed for relevance, impact and continued access to the wider curriculum.
- Pupils with SEND are supported to take part in trips, clubs, PE, enrichment, pupil leadership and wider school life with reasonable adjustments and risk assessment where necessary.

Teacher responsibility

Even where a pupil receives intervention outside the classroom or support from an additional adult, the class teacher retains responsibility for planning, teaching, assessment and progress.

8. THE HIVE



Aim of The Hive

The Hive is Poplar Farm's targeted specialist-style provision within the mainstream school. It provides a quieter, more flexible environment for identified pupils who benefit from additional support with engagement, communication, regulation, sensory needs, independence or access to learning.

Access Access is based on assessed need, intended outcomes, available provision and regular review. An EHCP is not, by itself, an automatic criterion for access.	Curriculum Provision may include personalised teaching, practical and sensory learning, communication work, regulation support and, for some younger pupils or pupils working developmentally below their chronological age, a play-based curriculum for part of the day.
Inclusion The Hive is not a separate school. Pupils maintain meaningful links with their mainstream class, peers and whole-school opportunities according to their individual needs.	Review Provision is reviewed through the graduated approach and, where applicable, the pupil's ISP or EHCP. The aim is progress, participation, wellbeing and increasing independence.

Factors considered when planning Hive provision

- Significant learning or developmental needs requiring provision beyond typical classroom adjustments.
- Significant communication, sensory, regulation or physical needs affecting access to learning.
- Need for a lower-stimulation or more flexible learning environment for identified parts of the day.
- Advice from external professionals and/or provision specified in an EHCP where applicable.
- Views of the pupil and parents/carers and evidence from ongoing assessment and review.

9. WORKING WITH PARENTS, CARERS AND PUPILS

Partnership with families and meaningful pupil participation are central to Poplar Farm's SEND practice.

Parents/carers We listen to concerns, share information, involve families in planning and review, explain decisions and seek consent where required for referrals and information sharing.	Pupils Children contribute to decisions in ways appropriate to their age, development and communication. We seek their views about strengths, challenges, helpful strategies and aspirations.
Reviews Families are invited to review ISPs and EHCP outcomes. The school aims to make meetings accessible and focused on progress, impact and next steps.	Communication The class teacher is usually the first point of contact. The SENDCO team becomes involved where concerns persist, needs are more complex or specialist coordination is required.

Parent expectations

We ask parents/carers to share relevant information promptly, attend review meetings where possible, support agreed approaches when appropriate, inform school of significant changes and raise concerns early so that they can be addressed collaboratively.

10. EXTERNAL PROFESSIONALS AND EHCPs

Working with external partners

Where school-based assessment and support indicate that specialist advice is needed, and subject to the relevant service criteria, Poplar Farm may work with:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational Psychology
- Working Together Team
- Specialist Teaching Team
- Occupational Therapy / Physiotherapy
- Sensory Education Support Team
- Behaviour Outreach Support Service (BOSS)
- Mental Health Support Team and other health or Early Help services as appropriate

Education, Health and Care needs assessments

Most pupils with SEND are supported through ordinarily available and SEND Support provision. Where a pupil has complex and persistent needs and evidence suggests that provision may be required through an EHCP, the school may support a request for an EHC needs assessment. Parents/carers and young people also have statutory rights to request an assessment.

Pupils with EHCPs

- The school must use its best endeavours to secure the special educational provision specified in the plan.
- Provision and progress towards outcomes are monitored throughout the year.
- EHCPs are reviewed at least annually, with the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals invited to contribute.
- The local authority is responsible for decisions about maintaining, amending or ceasing an EHCP.

11. MEDICAL NEEDS, SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING

Medical conditions

Pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so they can access education, including trips and PE. Some pupils with medical conditions may also be disabled under the Equality Act 2010 and/or have SEN.

- Individual Care Plans (ICP's) are developed where required in consultation with families and relevant health professionals.
- Staff receive training for specific medical or delegated healthcare needs where necessary.
- Medication, emergency arrangements, personal care and risk assessments follow the school's relevant policies and procedures.
- Current statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions remains in force, Poplar Farm will update practice when revised national guidance is issued.

Safeguarding

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding barriers. Staff follow Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the school's safeguarding procedures, maintaining a child-centred approach and ensuring communication needs, behaviour, dependency on adults and potential barriers to disclosure are considered.

Bullying

Bullying of any pupil is taken seriously. Pupils with SEND are supported to report concerns in accessible ways. The school's Relationships and Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies set out prevention and response arrangements.

12. TRANSITION AND PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT STAGE

Transitions are planned carefully because change can create additional barriers for some pupils with SEND.

Transition	Support
Starting at Poplar Farm	Information sharing with nurseries or previous settings, parent meetings, liaison with professionals, visits and individual transition arrangements where needed.
Moving class/year group	Structured staff handover, sharing of pupil plans, visits to the new classroom/adults, photographs or social stories and enhanced transition where appropriate.
Moving to secondary	Early liaison with receiving SENDCOs, transfer of records, additional visits, pupil/parent meetings and individual transition programmes for pupils requiring enhanced support.
Leaving Poplar Farm	SEND records are transferred securely to the receiving setting in line with data-protection and records-management requirements.
Preparation for adulthood	
From primary school onwards, provision should build the foundations for future independence, communication, relationships, participation, self-advocacy and successful transition to the next stage.	

13. ACCESSIBILITY, ADMISSIONS AND EQUALITY

Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

- Poplar Farm seeks to remove barriers to curriculum access, participation, information and the physical environment.
- Reasonable adjustments, auxiliary aids and services are considered so disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage.
- Accessible resources, ICT, adapted equipment, seating, sensory or movement arrangements and environmental adaptations are provided according to assessed need.
- The school's Accessibility Plan provides further detail and is reviewed in line with statutory requirements.

Admissions

Poplar Farm is committed to inclusive admissions and does not discriminate unlawfully against disabled pupils or pupils with SEND. Admissions are managed in accordance with the school's admissions arrangements and statutory requirements. Where an EHCP names the school, the statutory consultation and placement process applies.

Equality

The school will not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil because of disability. Where parents/carers have accessibility needs, the school will seek to provide information and communication in an accessible format.

14. RECORD KEEPING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Records

- SEND records are stored securely and access is limited to staff who need the information to support the pupil.
- ISPs, EHCP trackers and ICP's are reviewed according to the school's review cycle and sooner when needs change.
- Information is transferred securely when a pupil moves setting, in line with data-protection and records-management requirements.

Evaluating SEND provision

Leaders evaluate SEND provision using a range of evidence rather than a single measure. This includes:

- Progress from starting points and towards individual outcomes.
- Quality of classroom adaptations and curriculum access.
- Impact of interventions and specialist provision.
- Pupil independence, engagement, attendance and wellbeing where relevant.
- Pupil and parent/carer voice.
- Participation in the wider life of the school.
- Staff confidence, training and implementation of agreed strategies.
- Patterns in identification, exclusions, attendance and achievement, considered alongside school and national information where appropriate.

Provision that is not working

Where support is not having the intended impact, the school returns to assessment: it reviews the barrier, fidelity and suitability of provision, seeks further advice where necessary and agrees a revised plan rather than simply continuing an ineffective intervention.

15. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Poplar Farm develops staff expertise through planned professional development, SEND briefings, coaching and specialist advice.

- All staff receive required safeguarding updates and read the relevant Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 material.
- Staff working with pupils who have specific needs receive appropriate training and guidance.
- Professional development may include autism and social communication, dyslexia and literacy difficulties, speech and language, sensory/physical needs, behaviour and regulation, medical needs, positive handling/de-escalation and effective deployment of teaching assistants.
- The SENDCO attends relevant networks and professional development and supports colleagues to translate guidance into classroom practice.
- From September 2026, the school will engage with relevant government-backed inclusion training and materials as these become available and appropriate.

Evidence-informed practice

The school seeks to use research and professional evidence when selecting interventions and deploying teaching assistants, while recognising that provision must be personalised to the individual pupil.

16. COMPLAINTS, RELATED POLICIES AND REVIEW

Concerns and complaints about SEND provision

Concerns should usually be raised first with the class teacher. Where the concern relates specifically to SEND provision or remains unresolved, parents/carers should contact the SENDCO team. If the matter remains unresolved, it should be raised with the Headteacher and then through the school's published complaints procedure. Decisions made by the local authority about EHC needs assessments or EHCPs have separate statutory routes of challenge.

Related school documents

- SEND Information Report 2026-27 and Poplar Farm SEND Pathway
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality information/objectives
- Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions / relevant medical policies
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection / Records Management policies

Policy review

Originally adopted	September 2018
Previous review	September 2025
Current review	September 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Next scheduled review	September 2027
Implementation	The Headteacher, SENDCO team, Local School Board and all teaching/support staff share responsibility for implementing this policy.

Acceptance of this policy includes a commitment to implementing it in full.