SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

In this policy the following members of staff are referred to:

TITLE	NAME
Head Teacher	Mia Santa-Humfrey
Executive Head Teacher	Lucas Motion
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCO)	Angela Sikka

INTRODUCTION

The School is committed to the equal treatment of all pupils including those with special educational needs ('SEN') and disabilities. This policy works towards eliminating disadvantages for pupils with SEN and with disabilities by:

- using best endeavours to ensure that all pupils (including those with medical conditions) get the support needed in order to access the School's educational provision and make good progress
- not treating disabled pupils less favourably than their peers,
- making reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage in matters of admission and education,
- ensuring that pupils with SEN and disabilities engage as fully as practicable in the activities of school alongside pupils who do not have SEN and disabilities,
- ensuring parents are informed when special educational provision is made for their child and are kept up to date as to their child's progress and development.

In drawing up this policy, the School has had regard to the following guidance and advice (in so far as they apply to the School):

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015)
- The Equality Act (2010)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (effective 1st September 2026)
- The Independent School Standards: Guidance for Independent Schools (Department for Education, April 2026)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's **Admissions Policy** and **Equal Opportunities – Pupils Policy** and **the School Accessibility Plan,** all of which are available on the School's website.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. In accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, a child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age;
- have a disability which either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or early years' providers;
- are under five years old and would be likely to have such difficulties if special educational provision were not made for them.

The expression "learning difficulty" covers a wide variety of conditions and may include those known as autistic spectrum condition, dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactivity) disorder, semantic processing difficulty and learning problems which result in social, emotional or mental health difficulties. The expression may also include those who have problems with their eyesight or hearing.

Children will not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught. The School's support for those children whose first language is not English is set out in the School's **English as an Additional Language Policy**.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

A child or young person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (as defined by the Equality Act 2010). Long term means that the impairment will have lasted or be likely to last for 12 months or more.

Not all pupils who have SEN are disabled and not all disabled pupils have SEN, but understandably there is overlap.

NEW MODEL SCHOOL COMPANY LTD (NMS) AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board of Directors and Advisors of NMS (the Advisory Board) is responsible for determining school policy and provision for pupils with SEN and disabilities.

The Head teacher together with the NMS Senior management team (SMT) is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the School's SEN provision and keeping the Advisory Board fully informed of the implementation of the School's policy in practice.

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator ('SENCO') responsibilities include:

- determining the strategic development of the SEN and disability policy and provision in the School, together with the Head teacher and NMS SMT.
- having overall day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN and disability policy.

- coordinating specific provision for children with SEN and disabilities, including those who have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).
- ensuring all staff understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and the School's approach to identifying and meeting SEN.
- ensuring that teachers are given any necessary information relating to a child's learning support needs and/or disabilities (if known) so that teaching practices are appropriate.
- ensuring parental insights are considered by the School to support their child's SEN and disability.
- liaising with external professionals and agencies, as appropriate.
- ensuring that the School keeps records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

All teachers are responsible for helping to meet a pupil's needs (irrespective of any specialist qualifications or expertise). All staff members are expected to understand this policy so that the School can identify, assess and make provision to meet those needs.

IDENTIFYING AND SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH SEN AND DISABILITIES

The School's curriculum, plan and schemes of work take proper account of the needs of all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. The School regularly reviews pupil progress to help monitor whether children are making expected progress. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN (and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN).

However, where the School reasonably considers that a pupil may have a learning difficulty, for example where there are early indications that a pupil is not making expected progress, the School will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents and the pupil (as appropriate) to help determine the action required including whether any additional support is needed, such as in-class support.

The School may request parents to obtain a formal assessment of their child (such as by an educational psychologist), the cost of which will usually be borne by the parents. Where parents wish to request a formal assessment from outside of school, they must ensure the School is given copies of all advice and reports received.

If there are significant emerging concerns, or identified SEN or disability, the School will take action to put appropriate special educational provision in place taking into account any advice from specialists. Parents should always be consulted and kept informed of any action taken to help their child, and of the outcome of this action. Parents, teachers and outside professionals (if appropriate) meet on a regular basis to review the Education Health Care Plans (EHCP). Alongside the parents' wishes and those of the pupils, educational targets are provided by the professionals. Due weight will also be given to a pupil's wishes (according to their age, maturity and capability).

Arrangements for special educational provision and support for all pupils, including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), are made through the School's graduated approach to SEN support: assess - plan - do - review:

- **Assess**: The School will carry out an analysis of the child's needs so that support can be matched to needs not already supported. The School may, in consultation with parents, engage external agencies and professionals to help assess the child's needs and advise on any support needed. Any specialist advice received will usually be discussed with the child's parents.

- **Plan:** Where it is decided to provide SEN support, the teacher and the SENCO will agree in consultation with parents and the pupil, as appropriate, the adjustments, interventions, support and any teaching strategies or approaches that are to be put in place. These will be recorded on the EHCP and also updated on the shared SEN register visible for relevant staff.

- **Do**: Teachers will work closely with the SENCO to assess and monitor the targeted plan of support and the impact of support and interventions in place for the child

- **Review**: The effectiveness of any support and its impact on the child's progress will be reviewed as agreed by the School and the parents. Teachers working with the SENCO will revise the impact and quality of the support and interventions in light of the pupil's progress and development and will decide on any changes to the support in consultation with parents and the pupil (as appropriate).

The School recognises that some pupils with a SEN may also have a disability. The School will do all that is reasonable in order to meet the needs of pupils with disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can adequately cater.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The School is committed to treating all pupils fairly. In light of the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the School will seek to ensure that disabled pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage, by comparison with pupils who are not disabled, by making reasonable adjustments.

1. To policies, criteria and practices (ie the way the School does things): and
2. By providing auxiliary aids and services (ie provision of additional support or assistance)

There is no standard definition of an auxiliary aid or service. Anything which helps, aids or renders assistance for disabled pupils or applicants is likely to be an auxiliary aid or service. Examples could include:

- Pieces of equipment
- Extra staff assistance
- Note-taking
- Induction loops
- Audio-visual fire alarms
- Readers and
- Assistance with guiding

The School is not required to remove or alter physical features to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils or applicants. Similarly the School is not required to provide auxiliary aids for personal purposes unconnected with its provision of education and services.

School staff seek to understand the needs of each and every pupil and to ensure that all pupils have the chance to make good progress according to their ability. In practice, making reasonable adjustments can be a daily, iterative process. Adjustments can often be made by staff at short notice or no notice, for example, taking steps to ensure that a child has understood instructions, or that they are seated where they are able to hear and concentrate.

Once any required adjustments are identified, the School will consider whether they are reasonable adjustments for the School by reference to the following factors:

- Whether it would overcome the substantial disadvantage the disabled child is suffering
- The practicability of the adjustment
- The effect of the disability on the pupil
- The cost of the proposed adjustment
- The School's resources
- Health and safety requirements
- The need to maintain academic, musical , sporting and other standards; and
- The interests of other pupils (and potential pupils)

The School will discuss the proposed adjustments with parents and where appropriate the pupil. The SENCO and (with the parents consent) any appropriate third party, which may include, for example, a medical practitioner or educational psychologist. The School will communicate any decision regarding reasonable adjustments with parents and the child (where appropriate).

Parents can assist the School in this process by ensuring that staff are informed of their child's needs, making available any relevant reports, assessments and information and working with the School if appropriate to implement any measures or reinforce any strategies put in place.

Where despite reasonable adjustments to assist a child's access to educational provision and the other benefits, facilities and services the School provides, a disabled pupil is evidently still at a substantial disadvantage, the School may draw this to the attention of the parents and make recommendations. This might include, for example seeking further external professional advice, seeking a statutory assessment, additional support funded by the parents or other external sources.

HOW DO PARENTS REQUEST ADJUSTMENTS?

If the parents feel that there are further particular adjustments the School could make, parents may write or speak with their class teacher in the first instance, or the SENCO. Parents are encouraged to provide copies of medical or specialists reports as evidence of the adjustments required.

RECORDING PROGRESS OF PUPILS WITH SEND

The School will record the progress of and any support for pupils with significant learning difficulties or disabilities or where they have an EHCP. This is drawn up in consultation with the pupil's teacher, the SENCO and Learning Support, the pupil and their parents and kept on the School's server. The EHCP contains key information such as:

- Progress and attainment level
- Outcome sought
- Teaching strategies
- The additional or different provision of support in place
- Involvement of any specialists or professionals
- Information the pupil would like to share about themselves, e.g. strengths, weaknesses, diagnosed learning difficulties, disabilities or medical conditions and what these mean to the pupil and how these affect them
- Date the EHCP was drawn up and date for review

The EHCP may be amended as and when circumstances change and at the request of the pupil, parent, teacher, SENCO or Learning Support.

The pupil (subject to their age and understanding), together with their parents and teachers, review the plan regularly and the child is encouraged to take ownership of it and to set their own targets.

EARLY YEARS PROVISION

The School monitors progress of all pupils in the EYFS. The designated teacher responsible for coordinating SEN provision in the EYFS provision is the SENCO. The child's class teacher will discuss with parents any concerns they may have about a pupil's needs and/or progress, in accordance with this policy and consult with the SENCO as appropriate.

THE SCHOOL'S SEN PROVISION

High-quality, adaptive teaching is the School's first response to pupils who have, or may have, special educational needs. Teachers are responsible for identifying emerging needs, understanding pupils' individual strengths and barriers to learning, and adapting their planning, teaching and assessment accordingly.

The School's SEN provision may include:

- adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments within the classroom;
- learning support within or outside the classroom;
- targeted individual or small-group interventions;
- additional specialist teaching;
- support and advice from the SENCO;
- appropriate auxiliary aids or equipment;
- liaison with parents and relevant external professionals; and
- where appropriate, additional one-to-one lessons. Any provision for which an additional charge may be made will be discussed and agreed with parents in advance. Parents will not be charged for reasonable adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010.

The School follows a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review, as detailed within this policy. Support is planned in response to the pupil's identified needs, with clear and measurable intended outcomes. The effectiveness of the provision and the pupil's progress are reviewed regularly and adjustments are made where necessary.

Parents will be involved in decisions about their child's support and kept informed of their progress. Pupils will also be encouraged to contribute their views, in a manner appropriate to their age and understanding.

The School aims to ensure that pupils with SEN can access the full curriculum and participate in school life, including educational visits, clubs and other activities. Reasonable adjustments will be considered and made where necessary to support their participation.

PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION HEALTH CARE PLAN ('EHC PLAN')

The needs of the majority of pupils with SEN will be met effectively through the School's SEN support. However, where the child or young person has not made expected progress despite the SEN support in place, parents and the School have the right to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHC Plan for their child. Parents are asked to consult with the School before exercising this right. The School will always consult with parents before exercising this right.

If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, parents have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). The School does not have this right of appeal.

Where a prospective pupil has an EHC Plan, the School will consult with the parents and the Local Authority (where appropriate) to ensure that the provision specified in the EHC Plan can be delivered by the School. Any additional services that are needed to meet the requirements of the EHC Plan will need to be charged to the Local Authority if the Local Authority is responsible for the fees and the School is named in the EHC Plan. In all other circumstances charges may be made directly to parents, unless the additional services can be considered to be a 'reasonable adjustment' where no charge will be made, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act (2010).

The School co-operates with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant annual reviews of EHC plans are carried out as required.

FURTHER ASPECTS RELATING TO SEND PROVISION

ADMISSIONS

The School does not unlawfully discriminate in any way regarding entry. The School welcomes all children who can make the most of the opportunities offered and can flourish in its caring environment. The **Admissions Policy** stresses that we welcome applications from pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities provided we can offer them any support that they may require and cater for any additional needs and that our site can accommodate them.

The School will treat every application from a SEN and disabled pupil in a fair, open-minded way. However, the School will assess all pupils for admission on the basis of its standard selection criteria which are changed from time to time.

The School endeavours to ensure that it is able to fully support the needs of all prospective pupils. Parents of children with disabilities, SEN or learning difficulties are required to discuss their child's needs with the School before the School considers the application for a place and so that in the case of a "taster day" adequate provision can be made for them on the day. Parents are asked to provide a copy of a medical report or educational psychologist's report to support a request, for example, for large print material, extra time, use of laptops or other special arrangements.

Before an offer of a place is made, the School will assess whether it is able to reasonably and adequately cater for and meet any SEN and disabilities (if known) through discussion and meetings with parents, consideration of any professional reports and references from previous schools/nurseries, and the assessment of the pupil at a taster day, as appropriate.

The School will look for a positive outcome to such considerations and will ensure that the child's admission is of benefit to all concerned.

There may be exceptional circumstances in which we are not able to offer a place for reasons relating to a child's disability. For example, if, despite reasonable adjustments, we feel that a prospective pupil is not going to be able to access the education offered, or that their health and safety or those of other pupils or staff may be put at risk, we may not be able to offer a place at the School.

The School, as a fundamental policy, provides a quality education at the lowest reasonable fee level and has very limited scope for funding additional resources or staffing.

The School's **Admissions Policy** is available on the School's website and can be supplied on request. It applies equally to all prospective pupils and details how the School supports those applicants with special educational needs and those with disabilities.

ATTENDANCE

The school recognises that SEN, disability, mental health and medical needs can create barriers to attendance. Where this occurs, the school will work with the pupil, parents and relevant professionals to understand those barriers, make reasonable adjustments and agree appropriate support, while maintaining high expectations for attendance.

WITHDRAWAL

We reserve the right, following consultation with parents, to request or require the withdraw of a pupil from the School if, in our opinion after making all reasonable adjustments the School is unable to meet the child's needs. In these circumstances the School will support the parents in finding an alternative placement which will meet the child's needs. Any decision to request withdrawal or require the removal of a pupil will be made as a last resort and in line with the terms of the parent contract.

Fees in lieu of notice will not be chargeable in these circumstances and the acceptance deposit returned.

THREE YEAR ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

A copy of the **School Accessibility Plan** is on the School's website and can be provided upon request by writing to Head Teacher. This sets out the School's plan to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the School's curriculum; improve the physical environment of the School for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities or services provided or offered by the School; and improve the delivery to disabled pupils of information which is readily accessible to pupils who are not disabled.

RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION AND SEN

Where a pupil has SEN, disability, communication needs or sensory differences, these will be taken into account when planning preventative support, assessing risk and deciding how to respond to distressed behaviour. Reasonable adjustments, proactive strategies and de-escalation will be prioritised. Any restrictive intervention will be recorded and reported in accordance with the school's Restrictive Intervention Policy, including where it forms part of an agreed individual support or behaviour plan.

BULLYING AND BEHAVIOURIAL ISSUES

All pupils are taught that any form of discrimination, bullying and harassment is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Pupils are taught through the curriculum, PSHE and regular assemblies, the importance of respecting each other and behaving towards each other with kindness, courtesy and consideration. The School's **Behaviour** and **Anti-Bullying policies** make clear the seriousness of bullying, victimisation and harassment and that appropriate sanctions will be applied to any pupil who displays inappropriate behaviour.

The School recognises that disabled pupils or those with SEN may be particularly vulnerable to being bullied. The School's **Anti-Bullying Policy** makes it clear that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and will be taken very seriously.

The School also recognises that bullying (or other matters such as bereavement) can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties. Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN but where there are concerns, an assessment may be undertaken to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues.

The School recognises that children with SEN and disabilities can face additional safeguarding challenges and additional barriers can therefore exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEN and disabilities being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

Staff will support such pupils in expressing any concerns they may have and will be particularly vigilant to any signs or indicators of abuse, discussing with the School's DSL as appropriate. The School's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** will be followed if there are any safeguarding concerns relating to a child.

ENTITLEMENTS TO ADDITIONAL TIME AND/OR SUPPORT IN EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

Children who have been diagnosed as having a learning difficulty may be entitled to support, such as additional time and/or modified provision, to complete external assessments. Parents should speak with the SENCO with regard to any application for additional support as soon as reasonably practicable.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

To ensure that parents and pupils can be given the most appropriate advice and support, it is important that all relevant information and documentation about any possible special educational need and any history of learning support is shared with the School. Parents must provide the SENCO with copies of any reports or recommendations concerning the pupil's special educational needs or disability from previous schools or elsewhere. Parents agree to do this when completing the registration form and accepting the terms and conditions of the parent contract.

CONCERNS

The School will listen to any concerns expressed by parents about their child's development and any concerns raised by children themselves. Parents must notify their child's class teacher or the SENCO if their child's progress or behaviour gives cause for concern.

We hope that any difficulty or concern can be sensitively and efficiently handled and resolved informally before it reaches the formal complaints stage. That said, the School's **Complaints Procedure** (which apply equally in the EYFS setting)] is on our website and sets out how parents can raise a formal complaint and how the School will handle it. We will also send parents a copy of the **Complaints Procedure** on request.

REVIEW

The school will review this policy following any changes to SEND legislation, the SEND Code of Practice or the implementation of the Government's SEND reforms, including any statutory requirements relating to Individual Support Plans.

The School will review this policy on an annual basis to ensure the School meets the needs of those pupils with special educational needs and those with disabilities.

Mia Santa-Humfrey
Head Teacher
September 2026

Review approved by Deborah Livsey CEO
New Model School Company Limited
September 2026

Next review date: August 2027