



Northstar  
New School

## SEN Policy 2023-2024

This policy was reviewed on:

**Date:** 24 August 2022

**By:** Euan Macdonald

**Policy will be reviewed on:** August 2024

This policy was ratified/reviewed by Governors  
on:

**Date:** 12 September 2022

**Frequency of review:** Every 2 years

**Note:** This document uses the most current Government information and guidance at the time of writing. It may change according to Government policy.

# 1 | Our school ethos

Our school is a learning community where we want everyone, pupils, staff and parents/carers and visitors, to feel welcome and to be valued, safe and ready for the work we share. We believe each individual is unique and has his/her own special talent which can be developed in a calm, thoughtful and ordered school where there is fairness, understanding, clear rules, and where the consequences of actions are accepted by all. With these elements in place we believe it is possible for every pupil, perhaps for the first time, to enjoy their education, to achieve to their potential and to feel that the problems that have led them to us can be worked with and their lives changed so they can hope and plan for a better and more fulfilling future.

- Our school is a collaborative learning community where we seek to use every member's creativity and resources and where everyone feels they belong
- Many of our pupils have experienced difficulties, trauma and rejection in their previous school life. We offer the stability that is a necessary prerequisite for reflecting on their experience and gaining insight, emotional literacy, resilience and empathy with others so their future can be different and happier
- In our school pupils are held accountable for their actions and are given the social and emotional support necessary to make changes when needed. We enable pupils to take responsibility and make restoration when their behaviour has been unhelpful and to gain alternative strategies and actions for the future
- No school is an island. We work in partnership with parents/carers, professional colleagues and pupils in order to maximize the chances of helping every pupil achieve to their potential. Together we are better.
- Teaching and learning is at the heart of all that we do. We aspire to ensure our teaching is well organized and planned, is inspiring and our lessons enjoyable and interesting in order that every pupil can become a confident learner and can progress and achieve.
- Our pupils are provided with opportunities and support to develop self esteem, interpersonal and social skills as well as to make positive choices in respect of their behaviour both in and out of school because we believe they will become successful members of society through the knowledge, values, and thinking skills learned in the

classroom.

- Everyone is encouraged when their achievements are publicly recognized. Our pupils will be entered into courses and exams that are externally validated and we will ensure their achievements will be properly accredited and shared with their family/carers and peers.

## 2 | Safer Care

‘It is the policy within Northstar New School to create and maintain a company-wide culture of vigilance in safeguarding children and young people and an active commitment to the promotion of their general well being, through the development and use of robust and rigorous recruitment and working practices, education and learning modules, child protection systems and multi-agency working’

## 3 | Introduction

Almost all our pupils will have an Education Health and Care Plan and some are Looked After with all the concomitant instability and uncertainty such circumstances generate. Many have a long history of absenteeism and a number have drug and alcohol abuse problems.

Given that some of our pupils are referred to us only at KS3 we are acutely conscious that we have a very limited ‘window of opportunity’ to address the issues set out in those pupils’ Education Health and Care Plan. In addition a significant number of our pupils arrive with a worrying lack of information about their achievements and/or attainments such as SAT results. This may be because they have failed to take such tests or because their results have become ‘lost’ in the system.

Therefore, in order to address their SEN, it is vital that we offer all pupils a comprehensive assessment on entry and an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is rigorously monitored and evaluated, shared with the pupil and their family or carers and that enables the pupil to engage in their own learning and enjoy their school life (sometimes for the first time ever!).

All our pupils are referred to us from Local Authorities and it is a requirement of our contract with them that we do not seek to include our pupils in mainstream schools. It is too late for that and most of our pupils have experienced multiple exclusions not only from mainstream schools but also from other specialist settings such as PRUs. However, it is an essential aspect

of our school that we ensure all our pupils are included in mainstream opportunities such as colleges, work, courses and/or leisure activities when they come to leave us.

## 4 | A Good School

There is a developing literature around the features that successful schools share in common. See, for example, Making Great Progress, DFES 2007; Essential Pieces: the jigsaw of a successful school, Brighthouse T., RM publishers, 2006; Removing Barriers to Achievement, DFES 2004, SEN Code of Practice, DFES 2014.

In 'Removing Barriers to Achievement' the DFES says, in relation to children with SEN, 'We will know we have made a difference when:

- Children with SEN have their needs met as soon as they become apparent, without the need for a period of failure
- Children with SEN feel valued members of their school community
- The barriers that divide mainstream and special schools have disappeared and all schools work in partnership with other services and the voluntary sector to meet the needs of local children
- There is much greater consistency in the quality of provision that children with SEN receive in school and from the County Council, and parents are confident of this.

## 5 | Definitions

The Education Act 1996 defines SEN as follows: 'Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.' Section 312

Defining 'learning difficulty' the Act states that a child has a learning difficulty if:

- They have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children their age
- They have a disability that either prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of their age in schools within the area of the local education authority
- He/She is under the age of 5

‘Special Educational Provision’ for our purpose as a school means, ‘educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools, in the area.

Put simply, most of our pupils have statements because they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of their peers. Because of this they need an adapted curriculum that will address the barriers to learning that cause them such difficulty in achieving, learning, gaining accreditation and exam results and successfully entering the adult world of work and leisure.

## 6 | Disability Equality Scheme

In reviewing this policy we have taken into account consideration of any potential implications of the Disability Equality Scheme.

It is the policy of Northstar New School that all pupils will have access to a curriculum that addresses the difficulties that have caused them to be referred to us, promotes and recognizes their learning, offers them opportunities and experiences that will enable them to meet the challenges of adult life and that promotes the values of caring for others, setting clear boundaries with explicit consequences and that operates in a fair and consistent manner.

In addition, for pupils with SEN, we will ensure that we work in line with the recommendations set out in Removing Barriers to Achievement and will promote the outcomes required by Every Child Matters. Specifically we will:

Support and enable the 4 key areas of the national strategy for SEN:

- **Early Intervention** – ensuring every pupil is assessed within 15 days of admission and teaching and learning will be informed by the assessment
- **Removing barriers to learning** – ensuring every pupil has an IEP and is encouraged and enabled to progress and learn
- **Raising expectations and achievement** – by ensuring all teaching teams have access to appropriate and on-going CPD so they have the skills and strategies to personalize learning and measure progress through on-going assessment
- **Delivering improvements in partnership working** – we will work closely with parents, the LA and other organizations to ensure the needs of all our pupils are addressed

Ensure that all pupils are enabled to achieve the 5 outcomes of ECM:

- **Being Healthy** – have access to regular exercise, know about and make healthy lifestyle choices, understand sexual health risks and the dangers of smoking and substance abuse, are encouraged to eat and drink healthily, recognize the signs of personal stress and have available strategies to deal with it.
- **Staying Safe** – display concern for others, refrain from intimidating and anti-social behaviour; feel safe from bullying and discrimination; feel confident to report bullying and racist incidents; act responsibly in high risk situations
- **Enjoying and achieving** – have positive attitudes to education, behave well and have a good attendance record
- **Making a positive contribution** – understand their legal and civil rights and responsibilities; show social responsibility, and refrain from bullying and discrimination; express their views at school and are confident their views and ‘voice’ will be heard; initiate and manage a range of organized activities in school and community organizations
- **Achieving economic and social well-being** – develop basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT; develop their self-confidence and team working skills; become enterprising, able to handle change, take initiative and calculate risk when making decisions; become financially literate and gain an understanding of business and the economy and of their career options; develop knowledge and skills when they are older, related to workplace situations

## 7 | Standards

The following standards set out clearly the responsibilities of managers and staff for meeting the needs of pupils with SEN in the school.

The Head Teacher must ensure that the school has a culture that meets the needs of pupils with SEN by:

- Ensuring the school works within and all staff know about and adhere to, the SEN Code of Practice as revised 2014, Removing Barriers to Achievement, ECM and the DFES SEN Toolkit.
- Ensuring that the school responds positively to national curriculum developments such as the new curriculum as a means of ensuring pupils with SEN have access to the same opportunities and challenges as their peers
- Ensuring all staff are fully aware of SEN policy and practice and work within it and that this is reflected in the schemes of work, lesson plans and lesson evaluations that they use
- Ensuring there is an annual audit and plan for the curriculum that covers all aspects of it as set out in the definition above, that promotes ECM outcomes for pupils and that demonstrates how each pupils SEN is met
- Ensuring all new staff are aware of the of each pupils SEN as appropriate and the actions that flow from it
- Ensuring that the school monitors and evaluates the progress each pupil with SEN makes and aggregates the information as one measure of the school's effectiveness
- Ensuring that teachers are up-to-date in their knowledge of SEN matters and are able to advise their colleagues in an effective and productive manner
- Ensuring that staff are kept up-to-date with regulations, research and legislation in relation to SEN
- Ensuring partnership arrangements with parents are productive and effective
- Ensuring partnership arrangements with LA colleagues who have responsibility for SEN are productive and effective
- Ensuring that all external consultants and trainers assisting in SEN matters have clear guidelines regarding what is expected of them and requiring of them to set out how their input will improve outcomes for pupils

Teachers must ensure:

- They play a full and active part in the development of policies, plans and processes for supporting and challenging pupils with SEN
- They have a good understanding of the curriculum modifications and adaptations that secure broad, balanced and relevant opportunities for pupils with SEN
- They deliver the curriculum in a manner that promotes the learning of each pupil and meets the requirements and learning style of each pupil as set out in their SEN and/or assessment
- They keep up-to-date, are aware of and incorporate as planned all relevant curricular developments i.e. the curriculum for pupils with SEN
- They are clear about the relationship between SEN, the curriculum, schemes of work, lesson planning and outcomes for pupils
- They are using appropriate adaptations and/or resources in order to meet particular SEN requirements
- they monitor the progress of each pupil and the class overall and evaluate pupils progress, achievements, learning, participation and enjoyment of their work
- They incorporate both the formal and the hidden curriculum in all that they do to address pupils' SEN – see curriculum policy
- They ensure the staff they work with understand each pupils' SEN and its importance in enabling pupils to learn

All staff must ensure they:

- Maintain an up to date knowledge and understanding of their professional duties and the statutory framework within which they work including the importance of addressing each pupils SEN
- Work as directed by the Head Teacher or Teacher to review with named pupils the targets set as a result of the SEN
- Contribute to the development of all aspects of the curriculum as appropriate to their role including meeting the SEN of named pupils
- Work as a team member and identify opportunities for working with colleagues to promote the curriculum, managing their work where appropriate and sharing the development of effective practice with them