

Special Educational Needs & Disability policy 2025-2026

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Approved by: Full Governing Body

Date: July 2025

Last reviewed on: July 2025

Next Review: September 2025

Key Principles of the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities policy

- Dorset Studio School has high expectations and aspirations for all students identified as having SEND in our school. All students have the right to thrive to unlock their potential.
- The school works hard to ensure all students make positive choices and form good habits. This will mean that students will be more consciously aware of their responsibility to present the best version of themselves and become increasingly aware of how to remain focused on learning.
- The school will endeavour to do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any student who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- Supporting students with special educational needs and disabilities is everyone's responsibility.
- This policy was developed in conjunction with: Parents and carers, teachers, SENDCO, SEND Governor, Principal and the Senior Leadership Team.

Aims of the policy

- To ensure our students become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.
- To create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, respect of achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all young people can thrive.
- To ensure students with special needs and disabilities will be fully included into the Studio School community and assisted to function within that community.
- To ensure students with special needs and disabilities have the most appropriate and aspirational curriculum pathway so that challenging literacy, numeracy and land-based specialist qualifications are achieved in prepared for post-16 transition.
- To ensure students with special educational needs are encouraged to take an active role in addressing their special educational needs and/or disability.
- To work in partnership with parent(s)/carer(s)/families to support their child's needs.
- To identify and support children and young people who have special educational needs and additional needs.
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014.
- To ensure the identification of students requiring SEN provision as early as possible to enable appropriate support to be put in place.
- To employ a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) and other key, suitably qualified staff i.e. specialist teachers
- To provide quality training for staff in special educational needs and disability.
- To provide support and advice to all staff who work with children with SEND.

Links to other policies & reports

- Dorset Studio School Data Protection Policy, incl. FOI & SAR requests
- Dorset Studio School Anti-bullying policy
- Dorset Studio School Teaching & Learning policy
- Dorset Studio School Behaviour & Rewards policy
- Dorset Studio School Accessibility Plan
- Equality information and objectives
- Safeguarding & Child Protection policy (incl. Safer Recruitment)
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Information Report
- Supporting children at school with medical conditions

Roles and Responsibilities

(i) The Governing Body

The Governing body will exercise their duty and have regard to the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. They will ensure that school arrangements endeavour to support those students with a disability and/or medical condition(s). In addition, the Governing Body will also make SEND information pertinent to the SEND Policy available in a separate document called 'The SEND Information Report'.

The governor who is specifically responsible for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is **Andrew Daw**. Any correspondence with Andrew should go through the school's e-mail address: **info@dorsetstudioschool.co.uk**

(ii) The Principal

- Has responsibility for the day –to- day management of all aspects of the Dorset Studio School's work including provision for the students with special educational needs. This provision should reflect the SEND policy.
- May modify or dis-apply from the National Curriculum.
- Has responsibility for statutory assessments, EHCPs and review procedure(s).
- Has responsibility for keeping the Governing Body fully informed on SEND issues
- Ensuring that the school has clear, flexible policies for working with families, which encourage their involvement.
- Has responsibility for the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the school.

(iii) The key responsibilities of the SENDCO include:

- Overseeing SEND strategy in conjunction with the principal
- Overseeing coordination of the school's SEND policy
- Delegating day-to-day responsibilities/tasks to the named specialist teachers
- Co-ordinating provision for students with SEND
- Liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a Looked After student has SEND
- Liaising with staff requiring advice on how to help students reach their potential
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Liaising with families of students with SEND
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- Being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially Dorset County Council and its support services
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a student and their parents are informed about possible options and a smooth transition is planned
- Working with the Principal and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) about reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all students with SEND are up to date
- Line manages the work of the specialist teachers

The SENDCO, Katherine Young, can be contacted at: send@dorsetstudioschool.co.uk

(iv) Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Ensure the school's agreed teaching pedagogy is followed to maximise the impact of teaching
- Ensure that the school's behaviour policy is consistently followed, using curiosity as a key strategy for supporting all students when they have trouble focusing on learning
- The progress and development of every student in their class
- Ensure that the students with SEND can access learning by putting reasonable adjustments documented in Support Plans into place
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCO to review each student's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy

Admissions Arrangements

Admission arrangements are mindful of national requirements supporting all students including those who are disabled, in a fair and non-discriminatory way, when securing admission to school. In addition to this Dorset Studio School makes appropriate reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who are disabled. Where adaptations are required to support physical or medical needs, Dorset Studio School liaises with the local authority, health services and families to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to meet individual medical conditions.

Facilities for those with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

The school has an Accessibility Plan that is monitored, reviewed and reported upon annually to the Governing Body in compliance with legal requirements. We are mindful of the duties under the Equality Act 2010 as amended in September 2012 to provide Auxiliary Aids and Services where appropriate as detailed in 'The Equality Act 2010 and schools – (May 2014)'. We comply with the requirement to support students with disability as defined by the Act.

The school has a range of specialist SEND facilities in place.

- The school site at Kingston Maurward is on one level and provides universal access for all students
- The school site at Poundbury has an enclosed platform lift which enables universal access to first floor classrooms for all students
- Adaptations for hearing impaired and deaf students, including flashing fire alarm lights
- Examination Access Arrangements
- Differentiated access to the curriculum, including reasonable adjustments

SEND Information Report & Local Offer

The school website holds our SEN information report. We comply with the statutory requirement to publish SEND information as specified in paragraphs 6.79 to 6.83 of the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25. This information is kept under review and updated regularly in liaison with parents / carers, governors and staff.

We publish further information about our arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for students with SEND on the local authority's website. This can be found at www.dorsetforyou.com/local-offer using the search engine to find our school or other Dorset schools. The local offer website holds a directory of facilities and resources available from many services within Dorset.

Identifying Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (July 2014) identifies SEND under four broad areas of need (sections 6.28 to 6.35):

i. Communication and Interaction

- ii. **Cognition and Learning**
- iii. **Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties**
- iv. **Sensory and/or Physical Needs**

Students may have needs in more than one category.

Dorset Studio School staff use a range of tools to assess the amount and level of SEND needed and the support required. These include:

- Liaising with feeder schools
- Attending Annual Reviews of prospective students
- Screening of the new intake through standardised numeracy and literacy testing
- More detailed testing and assessment, where appropriate
- Half-termly assessment
- Discussion with families
- Discussion and feedback from staff
- Monitoring work
- Support through the school's tutoring / House system
- Working with outside agencies, including the Educational Psychologists, SENSS, CAMHS, Speech and Language, other statutory and voluntary organisations such as DORSETMIND.

Educational Psychologist Service is available for students' undergoing assessment for an EHCP. The school also utilises services offered by SENSS (Special Educational Needs Support Service) to improve the quality of our universal teaching provision as well as individual casework.

Contact with families is made via letter, telephone and email and parents are also invited into the school. As many families live some distance from the school, discussions may take place by phone or on a virtual meeting platform.

Medical information is given to staff on a need-to-know basis and with parental consent.

Most children with special education needs or disability will have their needs met through a whole school, universal quality-first teaching approach. At SEN Support (K) and those students with an EHCP, Learning Plans are available for staff to use in their planning and lesson delivery. These plans detail strategies that work for individual students to 'fine grain' and personalise the learning experience for them.

Universal, Quality-First Teaching

Staff are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the students in their class, including where they access support from Teaching Assistants or specialist staff.

Universal, quality-first teaching, personalised through appropriate differentiation and approaches for individual students, are the first steps in responding to students who have, or may have, learning needs. We regularly review the quality of teaching for all students, including those at risk of underachievement. Where additional intervention is not resulting in progress, it is possible that a student may have special educational needs. If a student has been identified as having special educational needs a Learning Plan will be written, and the school will keep a careful record of this to monitor progress.

Where it is decided that a student does have SEND, the decision should be recorded in the school records and the student's parents / carers will be informed, by letter, email or phone call, that special educational provision is being made. **This information must be added onto ARBOR at the point when the decision is made to add the student to the school's special educational needs and disabilities register.**

The SENDCO will use the school's tracking system and comparative national data and expectations to monitor the level and rate of progress for students identified with SEND.

Staff monitor the progress of all students to identify those at risk of underachievement. We recognise that needs are sometimes affected by other factors which are not educational but nevertheless impact on learning. These are identified as far as possible and addressed appropriately using additional processes and other strategies.

The following are examples of other influences upon progress:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Adverse Childhood Experiences & Trauma (ACE)
- Health and welfare
- English as an Additional Language
- Pupil Premium
- Looked After Children
- Service children
- Disability where there is no impact on progress and attainment.
- Behaviour where there is no underlying SEND
- Bereavement and family issues.
- Post COVID issues and learning decay

Management of SEND students in school

Students are assessed on their progress in the main academic subjects every six weeks and parents receive a report on that progress. Students not making sufficient progress are identified and supported. A process of **"Assess, Plan, Do, Review"** will be implemented where a student is identified as having SEND. This is part of the school's **graduated approach**.

We will work closely with parents/carers and students to agree, action and monitor individual progress over time so that special educational needs for all children are addressed appropriately, effectively and with good outcomes.

The graduated approach:

1. Teacher notes student is struggling / underperforming / not achieving expected outcomes
Teacher differentiates for student (person-centred) and monitors
2. If the student continues not to progress the teacher invites SENDCO / SLT/ Head of Subject to observe and make suggestions to support differentiation
3. Student continues not to progress. Teacher seeks further advice and support from SENDCO/SLT/ Head of Subject

4. SENDCO assesses (which may be in conjunction with external agencies). Additional support may be provided and may include:
 - a. Teaching Assistant support
 - b. Pupil withdrawal for 1:1 or small group intervention, to be reviewed regularly i.e. at least once per term
5. No progress: SENDCO invites outside agency to assess. Outside agency gives advice which is put into practice
6. No progress: may seek Statutory Assessment.

It is important to note the school must agree to request to assess for Statutory Assessment to make this application. Generally, the school will consider the evidence that it must determine whether this route is an appropriate one. This evidence must be detailed and robust, illustrating that several cycles of 'plan-do-review-evaluate' have been completed without sustained progress.

If parent(s)/carer(s)/family disagree with this judgement, they are entitled to make their own submission.

Monitoring & Evaluation of Special Educational Needs & Disability

SEND provision is monitored and evaluated through gathering views of students and parents/carers, staff monitoring and using school data too ascertain effectiveness and value for money.

The policy is reviewed on an annual basis, and a report is presented by the Principal to the Governors in the Autumn Term. The Governors have a duty to report annually to Parents and must refer to:

- the success of the policy
- any significant changes in the policy
- any proposed changes in designation following consultation with the LA and other schools
- the allocation of resources to and amongst children with special educational needs.

Removing SEND provision

A student will be removed from the SEND Register if it is deemed that they have made sufficient progress over a significant period of time and are able to access the curriculum successfully without additional support. All students will continue to be monitored, and their progress tracked, so that staff will be alerted to potential learning issues. For some students it is possible that they will benefit from access to additional support periodically during their school experience; parents will be consulted at each stage if it is deemed necessary for support to be provided or when there is clear evidence it is no longer required.

A student with an EHC Plan will follow the statutory guidance for ceasing an EHC Plan as set out in the Code of Practice. The ceasing of an EHC Plan is determined by the local authority where a student no longer requires the special education provision as specified in the EHC Plan.

However, a student's progress will continue to be monitored by using the school's tracking systems.

Record keeping

All data including data stored electronically is subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into force in May 2018.

All paper records will be held in line with the school's policy/protocol on security of information.

Supporting children with medical needs

Dorset Studio School will work within the statutory guidance, 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions' – (*DfE April 2014*). We will comply with the duties specified under the Equality Act 2010.

We recognise that provisions relating to disability must be treated favourably and that Dorset Studio School is expected to make reasonable adjustments in order to accommodate students who are disabled or have medical conditions. (See the Dorset Studio School's policy on 'Supporting children at school with medical conditions').

Transition arrangements

Dorset Studio School is committed to ensuring that parent(s)/carer(s)/family have confidence in the arrangements for students on entry to our school, in the year-to-year progression and at the point of exit and transition to the next school. Staff will discuss these arrangements with parents / carers and agree the information that should be passed to the next phase of education.

Students starting at September attend a transition day in July. Some students with specific needs are invited to come into the school before and/or after the transition day so that they can become better acquainted with the physical building before starting.

With the consent of students at the end of their time at the school, and of their parent(s)/carer(s)/family, the school will liaise with the providers of the next stage of their education. This will include inviting the providers to the annual review of students with an EHC Plan in their last year at the school.

Students for whom a request for assessment is made for an EHC Plan will be assessed using the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (*DfE - July 2014*) and if appropriate, issued with an EHC Plan.

Training

Training needs are identified through a process of analysis of need of both staff and young people as and when required. In addition, annual training for teaching and support staff is provided through INSET sessions on the use of specific learning support strategies within the classroom, along with guidance on how to access and contribute to Learning Plans and Exam Access Arrangements for SEND students. Training is also provided for teaching and support staff to use a Trauma Information Approach to effectively supporting students with SEMH needs.

- The SENDCO will provide information on specific needs for new staff and teachers as part of their induction training.
- The SENDCO also maintains up-to-date knowledge by training with other schools in Dorset through the Dorchester Area Schools Pyramid (DASP) and the Inclusion Briefing Network.
- Additional training may also be arranged to support specific medical needs and will be arranged in conjunction with medical professionals.

SEND Information

Dorset Studio School presents its SEND information in three ways:

- By information placed on the school website
- By following the link from the school website to the local authority's Local Offer website.
- Through information contained in this policy which is also published on the school website.

All information can be provided in hard copy and in other formats upon request. Alternatively, families without internet access may visit the school to use IT facilities to view the school and local authority's websites.

The school website will hold an area for SEND on which is held:

- **The SEND Policy**
- **The school's SEN Information Report**
- **Link to Dorset's Local Offer website**
- **The policy for Supporting children at school with medical conditions**
- **The Accessibility Plan**
- **Link to the Equality information**
- **Link to school admissions information**

Accessibility

Dorset Studio School publishes its Accessibility Plan on the school website. Further information about our school's accessibility can be found on the local authority's *Local Offer* website; this can be found on www.dorsetforyou.com.

Complaints

It is hoped that all situations of concern can be resolved quickly through discussion and early action. However, if a parent / carer feels that their concern or complaint regarding the care or welfare of their child has not been dealt with satisfactorily, an appointment can be made by them to speak and explain the issues to the SENDCO.

Dorset Studio School publishes its complaints policy & procedure on the school website.

Reviewing the SEND policy

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually.