Mayfield House School

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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Connect • Support • Achieve

Last updated: September 2026

Signed by:			
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Contents

1. Statement of Intent
2. Legal and Regulatory Framework
3. School Context and Scope
4. Definitions and Areas of SEND
5. Principles and Objectives
6. Roles and Responsibilities
7. Identification and Assessment
8. Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review
9. Education, Curriculum and Reasonable Adjustments
10. Individual Provision and Education, Health and Care Plans
11. Annual Reviews
12. SEMH and Pastoral/Therapeutic Support
13. Safeguarding Pupils with SEND
14. Behaviour, Attendance and SEND
15. Pupil and Parent/Carer Participation
16. Admissions and Consultation
17. Transition and Preparation for Adulthood
18. External Agencies and Multi-agency Working
19. Staff Training and Professional Development
20. Funding and Commissioned Provision
21. Records, Information Sharing and Confidentiality
22. Equality, Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments
23. Complaints and Disagreement Resolution
24. Monitoring, Proprietor Assurance and Review

1. Statement of Intent

Mayfield House School is an independent special school for pupils aged 6 to 16. The school recognises that pupils may have a range of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning needs, and sensory and/or physical needs. Anxiety, trauma and barriers to engagement may interact with these needs and must be understood in the context of the individual pupil.

Our approach is consistent with the school ethos, Connect • Support • Achieve. We seek to understand each pupil, remove barriers to learning and participation, provide ambitious and appropriately adapted education, and support pupils to make meaningful progress from their individual starting points.

The school will work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers, placing local authorities, health and social care professionals and other agencies as appropriate. Provision will be person-centred, evidence-informed and regularly reviewed. Safeguarding, welfare, education and preparation for adulthood are considered together rather than as separate processes.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to the legal and regulatory framework applicable to Mayfield House School as an independent school in England, including:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002, where applicable
- Equality Act 2010 and associated regulations
- Children and Families Act 2014, including provisions relevant to Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans and independent special schools
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, as amended, where applicable
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended
- Independent School Standards guidance, Department for Education, April 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015, as updated), having regard to the provisions that apply to the school and using its principles to inform good practice
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and the current non-association independent schools inspection toolkit and operating guidance
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions, where relevant
- Working together to improve school attendance, Department for Education, July 2026
- Information sharing to safeguard children and young people, Department for Education, September 2026

Mayfield House School is an independent special school and is not currently approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The statutory duty placed on section 41

approved independent special schools to have regard to the SEND Code of Practice therefore does not apply to the school in the same way. Nevertheless, the school uses the principles of the Code, including person-centred planning and the assess-plan-do-review approach, as a framework for good practice where appropriate. Where pupils are placed or funded by a local authority, or where an EHC plan is in force, the school will cooperate with the relevant authority and meet the obligations applicable to the placement and plan.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding, Admissions, Behaviour, Attendance, Accessibility, Equality, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, SEMH, Physical Intervention, Careers, Complaints, Data Protection and Records Management policies and procedures.

3. School Context and Scope

This policy applies across Mayfield House School and to all pupils, employees, agency staff, volunteers and professionals working on behalf of the school. It recognises the specialist nature of the school and the need for provision to be responsive to individual profiles rather than based solely on diagnostic labels.

Pupils placed at Mayfield House will commonly have an EHC plan and an established SEND profile. The school will nevertheless continue to assess pupils' strengths, barriers, progress and emerging needs. A pupil's existing diagnosis or EHC plan does not remove the need for ongoing professional curiosity, assessment and review.

4. Definitions and Areas of SEND

For the purposes of this policy, the school uses the statutory concepts of special educational needs and disability. A child or young person has SEN where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Disability is understood in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The school recognises the four broad areas of need used within the SEND framework:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

These areas are not used as rigid categories. Needs often overlap and may change over time. The school will consider the whole pupil, including communication, health, development, attendance, safeguarding, relationships, prior experiences and environmental factors.

5. Principles and Objectives

In implementing this policy, Mayfield House School will:

- hold ambitious, realistic and individualised expectations for every pupil;
- secure access to a broad, balanced and appropriate curriculum;
- identify and reduce barriers to learning, participation, communication and wellbeing;
- make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and avoid discrimination;
- use high-quality teaching and appropriate adaptation as the starting point for provision;
- involve pupils and parents/carers meaningfully in decisions;
- use assessment and review to establish whether support is working;
- ensure EHC plan provision and outcomes inform day-to-day practice where a plan is in force;

- support successful transitions and preparation for adulthood;
- work effectively with external professionals and commissioning local authorities; and
- maintain clear evidence of provision, impact, review and leadership oversight.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Proprietors/Directors are responsible for strategic oversight and assurance. They will:

- ensure the school complies with the Independent School Standards and other applicable legal duties;
- ensure appropriate leadership, staffing, resources and systems are in place for pupils with SEND;
- receive sufficient information to assure themselves that provision is implemented and reviewed effectively;
- ensure equality and reasonable-adjustment duties are understood and met;
- hold the Headteacher to account for the quality, safety and effectiveness of provision; and
- review this policy and significant SEND risks or compliance issues.

The Headteacher has operational accountability for ensuring that the policy is implemented across the school. The Headteacher will ensure that SEND is integrated into curriculum, assessment, safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, staff development and school improvement arrangements.

The SENCO will coordinate SEND provision and professional practice. The SENCO will:

- coordinate the day-to-day operation of SEND arrangements;
- maintain oversight of pupils' needs, provision and review arrangements;
- advise staff on identification, assessment, adaptation and the graduated approach;
- support the implementation and review of EHC plan provision and outcomes;
- liaise with pupils, parents/carers, local authorities and external professionals;
- support transitions and annual reviews;
- ensure SEND records are accurate and current;
- identify staff training needs and provide or arrange professional guidance; and
- escalate concerns about unmet provision, insufficient resources, safeguarding or lack of progress to the Headteacher.

Teachers remain responsible and accountable for the education, progress and day-to-day inclusion of pupils they teach, including where support is delivered by teaching assistants, pastoral practitioners or specialists. They must know the pupil's relevant needs, outcomes, strategies, reasonable adjustments and safeguarding considerations.

Teaching assistants, pastoral staff and other support staff will implement agreed strategies and interventions under appropriate professional direction, contribute observations and evidence, and promptly report concerns or changes in presentation. Specialist advice does not replace teacher accountability or safeguarding responsibilities.

7. Identification and Assessment

Identification is an ongoing process. The school will draw on information available before admission and throughout placement, including EHC plans, previous school records, professional reports, baseline and curriculum assessment, observation, attendance, behaviour and safeguarding information, pupil voice and parent/carer knowledge.

Where progress, engagement or presentation gives cause for concern, staff will not assume that this is explained solely by an existing diagnosis, SEMH need, anxiety, behaviour, English as an

additional language, disadvantage or previous experience. Further assessment or professional advice will be sought where appropriate.

English as an additional language is not, in itself, a special educational need. Assessment will distinguish, so far as reasonably possible, between language acquisition and SEND while remaining alert to the possibility that both may be present.

8. Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

The school uses the assess-plan-do-review cycle as a practical framework for reviewing support and removing barriers:

- **Assess:** build a clear, holistic understanding of strengths, needs, barriers, baseline information and the factors affecting progress.
- **Plan:** agree intended outcomes, teaching adaptations, reasonable adjustments, interventions, responsibilities, resources and a review point.
- **Do:** implement the agreed provision consistently. The teacher retains responsibility for the pupil's education even where another adult delivers an intervention.
- **Review:** evaluate evidence of progress, participation, wellbeing and impact; obtain pupil and parent/carer views where appropriate; and decide whether provision should continue, change, intensify or end.

Where support is not securing the intended progress, the school will consider whether the need has been correctly understood, whether provision has been delivered as planned, whether further assessment is required, and whether additional or different specialist input is necessary.

9. Education, Curriculum and Reasonable Adjustments

The school will provide a curriculum and teaching approach suitable for pupils' ages, aptitudes and needs, including those identified in EHC plans. Adaptation will seek to increase access without unnecessarily lowering ambition.

Appropriate adaptations and support may include:

- appropriate scaffolding, modelling and chunking;
- adapted communication and visual supports;
- sensory and environmental adjustments;
- additional processing or response time;
- adapted resources, equipment or technology;
- planned movement, regulation or nurture opportunities where educationally appropriate;
- alternative methods of recording or demonstrating learning;
- access arrangements where criteria are met; and
- carefully planned adult support which promotes engagement and independence rather than dependency.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered proactively and individually. The school will not apply blanket rules where an adjustment is reasonably required because of disability.

10. Individual Provision and Education, Health and Care Plans

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, relevant staff will have access to the information they need to fulfil their role. The school will translate relevant outcomes and specified provision into practical day-to-day arrangements, individual plans and teaching strategies.

The school will maintain evidence showing how provision is delivered and reviewed. Where the school believes provision cannot be delivered as specified, circumstances have materially changed, or the plan no longer accurately reflects need, the SENCO or Headteacher will raise this promptly with the placing local authority and parent/carer rather than allowing an unmet provision issue to continue unaddressed.

Where a pupil without an EHC plan appears to require provision beyond that reasonably available through the school's existing arrangements, the school will discuss the evidence and options with parents/carers and relevant professionals. Where appropriate, this may include supporting or making a request for an EHC needs assessment in accordance with the statutory framework.

11. Annual Reviews

The school will cooperate with the responsible local authority in the statutory review of EHC plans and will convene or contribute to annual review meetings where requested or required. Reviews will be person-centred and informed by current evidence.

Annual reviews will consider, as appropriate:

- progress towards EHC outcomes and curriculum goals;
- whether specified provision remains suitable and is being delivered;
- changes in need, diagnosis, communication or health;
- attendance, engagement and barriers to education;
- safeguarding and welfare considerations where relevant and lawful to share;
- pupil and parent/carer views;
- professional advice and the effectiveness of interventions;
- transition planning; and
- from Year 9 onwards, preparation for adulthood.

Reports, recommendations and information will be provided within applicable statutory or local-authority timescales. The school will not wait for the annual review where urgent amendment, reassessment or additional support may be necessary.

12. SEMH and Pastoral/Therapeutic Support

SEMH is a recognised area of special educational need. At Mayfield House, pastoral and therapeutic-informed practice complements education but does not replace teaching, safeguarding, clinical assessment or statutory provision.

Support may include nurture, regulation strategies, structured pastoral interventions, counselling-informed work, Thrive-informed approaches, Forest School or other agreed provision according to need and the competence of staff. Where specialist or clinical advice is provided, staff will work within professional boundaries and the school's safeguarding and information-sharing arrangements.

The school will seek to understand the function and context of behaviour, including possible communication, sensory, trauma-related or emotional factors, while maintaining appropriate expectations for safety and conduct.

13. Safeguarding Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that children with SEND can face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers to recognising or reporting abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff must maintain

professional curiosity and must not attribute injuries, distress, changes in behaviour, communication or attendance automatically to a pupil's disability or SEND.

Additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers may include:

- communication barriers or reliance on adults;
- greater risk of isolation, bullying or child-on-child abuse;
- online vulnerability, grooming, exploitation or radicalisation;
- difficulty distinguishing unsafe behaviour or relationships;
- assumptions that behaviour or injury relates to the pupil's condition; and
- the possibility that a pupil may show distress through behaviour rather than verbal disclosure.

All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. The DSL and SENCO will liaise where this is necessary to understand need and safeguard the pupil, while safeguarding decision-making remains within the school's safeguarding arrangements. Physical intervention must follow the school's Physical Intervention Policy and must take account of individual needs and known risks.

14. Behaviour, Attendance and SEND

SEND will be considered when understanding behaviour and barriers to attendance, but will not be used to make assumptions or to remove appropriate expectations. Staff will consider whether reasonable adjustments, communication support, curriculum changes, environmental factors, unmet need or safeguarding concerns are contributing to difficulties.

Responses to behaviour will be consistent with the Behaviour Policy and will be lawful, proportionate and sensitive to disability and SEND. Where patterns emerge, the school will review support rather than relying only on repeated consequences.

Where attendance is a concern, the school will work with the pupil, family, placing authority and relevant professionals to understand barriers and develop appropriate support, while maintaining clear expectations around access to education.

15. Pupil and Parent/Carer Participation

Pupils and parents/carers are partners in SEND planning. The school will seek views in a manner that is accessible and proportionate to the pupil's age, communication profile and understanding. To support meaningful participation, the school will:

- use clear and accessible language;
- identify strengths, interests and aspirations as well as needs;
- explain proposed support and review its impact;
- provide appropriate communication methods or advocacy where necessary;
- record significant views, decisions and disagreements; and
- ensure that the pupil's voice is not assumed to be identical to the views of adults around them.

16. Admissions and Consultation

Admissions will be managed in accordance with the school's Admissions Policy, registration, capacity, approved age range and specialist provision. The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will not unlawfully discriminate against a child because of disability or SEND.

Where a local authority consults the school about a pupil with an EHC plan, the school will consider the plan and available evidence carefully, identify any further information reasonably required, assess whether needs can be met within the school's registration and provision, and

respond to the local authority within the applicable process and timescale. The school will not give an assurance that needs can be met without adequate evidence and consideration of the individual pupil.

Any decision or response concerning placement will distinguish between the school's admissions arrangements, the statutory EHC plan consultation process, equality duties and contractual or commissioning arrangements. The school will work constructively with the local authority and family to support appropriate placement decisions.

17. Transition and Preparation for Adulthood

Transitions will be planned early and proportionately, including entry to Mayfield House, movement between classes or sites, changes of key stage and transition to post-16 education, training or other provision.

From Year 9 onwards, EHC plan review and individual planning will give explicit attention to preparation for adulthood, including further education or training, employment aspirations, independent living skills, community participation, relationships, health and self-advocacy as appropriate to the pupil.

The school will provide careers education, information, advice and guidance in accordance with the duties applicable to the school and its Careers Policy, with appropriate adaptation for pupils' SEND and communication needs.

18. External Agencies and Multi-agency Working

The school will work with relevant education, health, social care and other professionals where this is necessary to understand or meet a pupil's needs. This may include educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, CAMHS or other health services, social care, careers services and local-authority SEND teams.

Professional recommendations will be considered alongside the school's direct knowledge of the pupil, EHC plan requirements and available evidence. Responsibilities, actions and review points should be clear. Information will be shared lawfully and proportionately, with safeguarding information shared where necessary to protect a child.

19. Staff Training and Professional Development

The Headteacher and SENCO will identify SEND training needs through induction, supervision, appraisal, pupil profiles, incidents, provision reviews and school improvement activity. Training will be proportionate to staff roles and the needs of current pupils. The school's SEND training and professional development programme may include, as appropriate:

- understanding SEND and neurodiversity;
- SEMH, anxiety and trauma-informed practice;
- communication and interaction;
- reasonable adjustments and adaptive teaching;
- sensory needs and regulation;
- safeguarding vulnerabilities for pupils with SEND;
- EHC plans, outcomes and provision;
- positive behaviour support and de-escalation; and
- specialist strategies required for individual pupils.

Staff will not undertake specialist or clinical functions beyond their competence, qualifications or role.

20. Funding and Commissioned Provision

As an independent special school, Mayfield House does not describe its SEND funding through the maintained-school delegated SEN budget model unless that terminology genuinely applies to a particular arrangement. Funding may arise through fees, local-authority placements, top-up or individually commissioned arrangements, or other agreed sources.

The school will deploy resources to meet agreed provision and educational priorities. Where additional provision requires agreement from a commissioning body, the school will identify the need and evidence promptly and will maintain a record of requests, decisions and any resulting risk to provision.

21. Records, Information Sharing and Confidentiality

SEND records will be accurate, relevant, secure and maintained in accordance with the school's Records Management and Data Protection policies. Records should enable the school to demonstrate what was known, what was planned, what was delivered, what impact was observed and what was decided at review. SEND records may include, as appropriate:

- EHC plans and amendments;
- individual plans, pupil profiles and provision records;
- assessments and progress information;
- annual review documentation;
- professional reports and advice;
- reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- parent/carer and pupil views; and
- significant correspondence with local authorities and external agencies.

Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with data protection and safeguarding requirements. Data protection law is not a barrier to necessary safeguarding information-sharing.

22. Equality, Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

The school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate unlawfully against disabled pupils and the duty to make reasonable adjustments. SEND and disability are related but distinct concepts; a pupil may be disabled without having SEN and may have SEN without meeting the statutory definition of disability.

Accessibility will be considered across curriculum access, the physical environment and information. The school's Accessibility arrangements and planning should be read alongside this policy.

23. Complaints and Disagreement Resolution

Concerns about the school's SEND provision should normally be raised promptly with the relevant teacher, SENCO or Headteacher so that they can be addressed at the earliest opportunity. Formal complaints about the school will be handled under the school's Complaints Procedure.

Statutory disagreements about EHC needs assessments, the content or issue of an EHC plan, placement decisions made by a local authority, or other appealable local-authority decisions are distinct from the school complaints process. Parents/carers will be directed to the relevant local-authority mediation, disagreement-resolution or SEND Tribunal information where appropriate. The school will cooperate lawfully with any such process.

24. Monitoring, Proprietor Assurance and Review

The Headteacher and SENCO will monitor implementation through appropriate evidence, which may include provision reviews, curriculum and progress information, EHC plan monitoring, attendance, safeguarding and behaviour information, pupil and parent/carer feedback, staff training, complaints and external professional advice.

The Proprietors/Directors will receive sufficient assurance to determine whether the school is meeting the Independent School Standards and other applicable duties. Assurance will focus on the effectiveness of arrangements and pupil experience, not simply the existence of documentation.

Where monitoring identifies a gap in provision, legal compliance, resources, training or safeguarding, the issue will be recorded, assigned to a responsible person and addressed within an appropriate timescale. Significant or persistent risks will be escalated to the Proprietors/Directors.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner following relevant changes to legislation, statutory guidance, inspection requirements, the school's registration or provision, or where monitoring identifies that amendment is necessary.

The next review date is September 2027.