

Policy 3.1: SEN/SEMH Needs & Reasonable Adjustments Policy

1. Policy Administration

Policy Version	Effective Date	Review Date	Lead Authority
1.0	 Date	 Date	 Person

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes the formal protocol for supporting "SENbetweeners"—children and young people who demonstrate persistent patterns of Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) challenges or learning differences but currently lack a formal medical diagnosis or Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The primary objective is to ensure that rights-based, evidence-led support is accessible and implemented at the point of need, rather than the point of diagnosis.

3. Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is rooted in and fully compliant with UK statutory guidance:

- **Children and Families Act 2014:** Mandates schools use "best endeavours" to provide special educational provision.
- **Equality Act 2010:** Establishes the "anticipatory duty" to make reasonable adjustments for any pupil whose impairment has a substantial, long-term adverse effect on daily activities.
- **SEND Code of Practice 2015:** Requires the implementation of the Graduated Approach for all pupils with identified needs, irrespective of clinical labels.

4. Core Mandate: Diagnosis is Not a Prerequisite

A formal medical diagnosis or EHCP is **not** a legal prerequisite for SEN recognition or entitlement to support.

- Rights are founded on identified need and evidence of disadvantage, not diagnostic labels.
- The absence of a diagnosis shall never act as a barrier to accessing SEN Support, reasonable adjustments, examination access arrangements, or the initiation of a statutory EHC needs assessment.

5. The Graduated Approach

This setting utilizes the Assess → Plan → Do → Review cycle for all users identified as SENbetweeners.

5.1 Assess

We involve the Class Teacher, SENCO, parents/carers, and the young person to map needs across the four broad areas of the SEND Code of Practice: Communication & Interaction; Cognition & Learning; SEMH; and Sensory/Physical Needs.

5.2 Plan

We develop SMART outcomes (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) and formally document reasonable adjustments in an Individual Support Plan (ISP) or Provision Map.

5.3 Do

Support is implemented consistently across all relevant settings, focusing on Quality First Teaching supplemented by targeted small-group or 1:1 work.

5.4 Review

Formal reviews are conducted at least three times per academic year to evaluate progress against outcomes and refine strategies.

6. Anticipatory Duty and Barrier Removal

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we maintain an anticipatory duty to identify and remove barriers before difficulties escalate.

6.1 Proactive Identification

Staff are trained to identify consistent patterns over time (typically six weeks or more) across multiple settings, including:

- **Masking:** Where a child appears regulated at school but experiences meltdowns at home.
- **Sensory Distress:** Hypersensitivity to noise, light, or touch.
- **Executive Function:** Difficulty following multi-step instructions or managing workloads.

6.2 Standardized Reasonable Adjustments

The following adjustments are routine and built-in, rather than "added on" as extras:

- **Environment:** Use of visual timetables, quiet workspaces, and sensory-friendly lighting.
- **Teaching:** "Chunking" tasks, providing visual aids, and allowing 5–10 seconds of "thinking time".
- **Routine:** Consistent transition warnings and the use of safe space signals.

7. Escalation and Rights

If progress remains insufficient despite evidence-based support, we will move toward:

1. **Formal SEN Support:** Documented and resourced transition to more rigorous monitoring.
 2. **Statutory Assessment:** Requesting an EHC needs assessment based on patterns and impact, noting again that a diagnosis is not required for this application.
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Authorized by:  Person

Date of Issue:  Date

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