

Policy: Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Reviewed: October 2025

Next review: October 2026

Mid-year updates:

Policy Monitoring

Libra Policies are reviewed when the need arises in line with legislation updates, guidance, and useful information we receive to improve and enhance our provision. Additionally, Policies are updated annually by relevant members of staff and the Senior Leadership Team.

Equality Statement

We believe that this policy is in line with the Equality Act as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any child or member of staff, and it helps to promote equality at this school.

We all have a responsibility to ensure equality permeates into all aspects of school life and that everyone is treated equally irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We want everyone connected with this school to feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth. We acknowledge the findings of the Race Disparity Audit that clearly shows how people of different ethnicities are treated across the public services of health, education, employment and the criminal justice system.

We wish to work closely with the School Council and to hear their views and opinions as we acknowledge and support Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that children should be encouraged to form and to express their views.

Introduction

The Libra School is a specialist independent school for children with complex social, emotional and mental health needs spanning a range of diagnoses. Most of these children also have co-existing learning difficulties that require special educational provision. All our children have EHCPs and therefore all are covered by this policy. However, at times in their education time with us some of our children will require a significantly greater need for help than their peers in a particular aspect of the curriculum, or in their general learning. In this policy, 'special educational needs' refers to a learning difficulty that requires special educational provision

Our vision is to enable all our children to achieve their full potential in a safe, welcoming, happy and innovative learning environment. We will strive to create responsible citizens who are independent and confident lifelong learners equipped to meet the challenges of a changing future. This will be achieved within an inclusive school that values every individual and celebrates the diversity of our community.

Aims and Objectives:

We aim to provide every child with access to a broad and balanced education. This includes the National Curriculum in line with the current Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years 2015.

We aim to:

- Ensure that we identify the needs of all our children to support academic progression and continued good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Ensure that every child is protected from harm and neglect and that every effort is made to enable them to learn and grow independently.
- Ensure that all our children have access to a balanced curriculum, differentiated where appropriate to meet the needs of their individual EHCP.
- Ensure that all our children can fully access the curriculum by providing extra support or additional resources where appropriate and by removing their barriers to learning.
- Develop a close working relationship with parents and carers.
- Ensure that all school staff with disabilities are treated fairly regarding recruitment, performance management, promotion, staff development, teaching environment and access to the school premises.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- Have high ambitions and expectations for our children

- Be empathic to each child's needs by promoting a strong partnership between children and staff
- Ensure all children make effective progress and realise their full potential.
- Ensure all children take a full and active part in school life.
- Create and maintain a school environment of positivity where all children are taught to embrace and value difference.
- Protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- Work with other schools and the Local Authority to share good practice to improve this policy

Within the school there are 4 broad categories of need:

- **Communication and interaction**

Children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs often change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Children with Autism, are likely to have difficulties with social communication and interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others. Communication and interaction difficulties are often not identified as needs within EHCPs although they are usually the root cause of other difficulties.

- **Cognition and learning**

Support for learning difficulties is often required when children learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. These are often not recognised as a need within EHCPs despite causing children significant learning challenges.

- **Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties**

Our children all experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying distressing, disruptive, or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children may have disorders such as foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder. **KCSIE Update states the word “disorder” needs to be removed from ASC, does this apply to other “disorders”?**

We have in place clear processes to support our children, including how we manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other children and how we manage physically aggressive behaviour that can pose a risk to other children, staff, and the child.

- **Sensory needs**

Some of our children require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided in mainstream as the environments do not allow them. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time and can significantly impact learning and present as social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

These four broad areas provide an overview of the range of needs present in our school. The following needs are not considered to be SEND but they may impact on a child's progress and attainment:

- Attendance and Punctuality.
- Medical conditions
- Family welfare
- EAL.

- Qualifying for free school meals.
- Receiving a child premium allowance.
- Being a looked after child.
- Being a child of a serviceman/woman.

These issues are monitored by the school for every child where relevant.

Consultation Process

Before children join the Libra school, there is a consultation process with the 0-25 Team of either Devon or Somerset Local Authority. During this process Libra senior management team, review the child's EHCP and all supporting documents and we consider if we can meet the child's needs without impacting the learning of any of our cohort. We will then return a positive or negative response to the consult and a fees quotation which will include what therapeutic interventions are required to meet the needs within the EHCP.

Placement

When a child is placed, a baseline assessment process begins, teacher assessment, formal assessment if appropriate, speech and language assessment, THRIVE assessment, parent, child and previous school discussions, review of all documentation, which will inform our relational support plan as well as academic starting points and end of year targets within the child's attainment documents. It will also inform what additional support is required to manage any specific learning difficulties.

Review of progress

Teachers update their assessment within the children's attainment documents every half term. This data is then tracked and reviewed by the senior management team to ensure that every child is on track to meet their end of year target in English, Maths and Science alongside behaviour and attendance data. This informs an action plan which specifically targets children whose behaviour is impactful on their own learning or the learning of others, and those who are not on track to meet the targets set. This involves a discussion of all the factors around a child and a conclusion about what strategies and or interventions (may involve external agencies) are best to use to achieve positive change which is disseminated to all staff. The impact of these strategies and interventions is reviewed in the meeting following the next half term data review. During these data review meetings children who are exceeding expectations will also be reviewed to ensure that their curriculum is suitably differentiated to be challenging and more challenging targets assigned.

Children's voices

Creating a school environment where children feel safe to voice their opinions of their own needs:

- SMT focus on building strong staff and children's relationships.
- Discussion with child before EHCP review meetings or PEPs with a trusted adult.
- Child is able to engage with review meetings and PEPs if they wish.
- Weekly tutor meetings to review progress towards identified targets in EHCP within attainment documents and to discuss concerns and worries.
- Libra Council meetings.
- Open door policy for children to approach and speak with SMT.

Working with parents:

To make consistent continuous progress in relation to SEND provision the school encourages feedback from parents/carers throughout the year, through:

- Invitations to EHCP review meetings and PEPs
- Informal conversations, including telephone conversations
- Open door policy for drop in meetings
- Use of parent questionnaires which are analysed and used to inform future SEND practice
- Parents' days
- Parent training programme
- Sharing targets, assessments and provision
- Support with transitions
- Provision of education reports at the end of every full term

- Home visits where appropriate

Monitoring and evidence

SEND provision at the Libra School is evaluated against the stated aims within this policy. Staff, parents/carers and children are all involved in the evaluation process. Evaluation is ongoing which means that the SEND provision is always the subject of continuous assessment and review through:

- Individual child consultation documentation
- Breakdown of fees documentation
- EHCP review documentation
- Assessment baselining programme and records
- Attainment records
- Education and behaviour data tracking and corresponding action plans
- Relational support plans
- Individual children's risk assessments
- Children's council meeting minutes

Staff training and supervision

This policy applies to all staff, children and parents. We ensure senior leaders, teachers and other staff:

- Are aware of this policy and their responsibility in its effectiveness.
- Receive induction training relating to SEND and this policy.
- Are aware of through professional development and monitoring of their responsibilities in terms of baselining, assessment and attainment records.
- Are aware of the children's EHCPs
- Are aware of how targets are transferred to attainment documents to achieve ongoing assessment.
- Are aware of the importance of cross curricular assessment to capture a child's full progress.
- Are aware of the children's relational support plans.
- Are aware of the children's risk assessments.

Responsibilities

The senior management team will:

- work in conjunction with the Directors to ensure all school staff, children and parents are aware of and comply with this policy.
- provide an environment that is safe, fun, stimulating and challenging to all children.
- promote an awareness of and respect for a diversity of cultures, values, beliefs and abilities.
- encourage parents to take an active role in policy development where appropriate.
- ensure all relevant risk assessments are in place to ensure a safe school environment.
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality.
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff.
- consider providing remote learning to children in circumstances when in-person attendance is either not possible or contrary to government guidance in accordance with school risk assessments and safeguarding guidance. This might include occasions when:
 - we decide that it is not possible for the school to open safely, or that opening would contradict guidance from local or central government.
 - individual children, for a short period, are unable to physically attend school but are able to continue learning.
- monitor and evidence the effectiveness of this policy.

Teaching and learning support staff will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy.
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes.
- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination.
- attend appropriate training sessions.
- report any concerns they have about any aspect of the school community.
- receive relevant training, periodically and ongoing as required, according to their role.
- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion.

- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications.

Children will:

- be aware of and contribute to all appropriate policies through the school council.
- work with and support the school council on all agenda items.
- strive to take pride in their work and work to the highest standard that they are capable of.
- listen carefully to all instructions given by the teacher, ask for further help if they do not understand and participate fully in all lessons.
- participate in discussions concerning progress and attainment.
- treat others, their work and equipment with respect.
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure the smooth running of the school.
- talk to others without shouting and or using physical aggression and will use language which is neither abusive nor offensive.
- hand in homework properly completed and on time.
- wear correct uniform.

Parents and Carers will be encouraged to:

- be aware of and comply with all school policies including this one.
- be encouraged to become involved in policy development by taking part in parent engagement opportunities and by maximising learning opportunities between home and school.
- Keep informed via termly newsletters of the children's curriculum.
- be encouraged to take an active role in the life of the school by attending parent-teacher consultations / Parent Open Days / fundraising and social events.
- ensure regular and punctual attendance of their child.
- notify school on the first day of child absence.
- have holidays out of term time and authorised by school.
- encourage effort and achievement.
- encourage completion of homework and return it to school on time.
- provide the right conditions for homework to take place.
- ensure correct school uniform is worn.
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.
- speak with children and staff respectfully and expect the same in return.

Linked Policies and documents:

Admissions / Attendance and Truancy / Safeguarding / Curriculum / Assessment and Attainment / Outdoor Learning

Policy Location

This policy can be found:

- on SharePoint within the staff and master's folder
- on the school website www.libraschool.co.uk
- available upon request from the office: admin@libraschool.co.uk / 01598 740044

