



Devonshire House Preparatory School

# Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Last review date	<i>November 2025</i>
Next review date	<i>November 2026</i>
Lead reviewer	<i>Charlotte Bird</i>

## **Serving North London Families**

Devonshire House is a co-educational prep school, offering unparalleled preparation for senior school and life thereafter. Our unwavering emphasis on individual growth, within an inclusive community, balances traditional values and modern practice to inspire fearless life-long learning.

Our school values are:

- **Growth** – we reach high
- **Courage** – we learn fearlessly
- **Wonder** – we are inspired to find our spark
- **Belonging** – we care and come together

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's:

- Accessibility Plan
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Admissions Policy



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## Devonshire House Preparatory School

### 1. Policy Statement

Devonshire House School is committed to ensuring that all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported to thrive in an inclusive, respectful, and academically ambitious environment. We promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination in line with the **Equality Act 2010**, the **SEND Code of Practice (2015)**, and the **Children and Families Act 2014**.

This policy supports compliance with the **Independent School Standards (ISSRs)** and the **ISI inspection framework**, particularly in relation to:

- Quality of education
- Welfare, health and safety
- Leadership and management
- Equality and accessibility

The SEND Policy is made available to **staff**, **parents**, and **inspectors** via:

- The school website
- Staff SharePoint and induction materials
- Parent handbook and admissions documentation
- On request via the school office

The Head of Learning Support (a member of the Senior Leadership Team), is responsible for the strategic oversight, implementation, and review of SEND provision across the school.

### 2. Definition of SEND

A child has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which may affect them accessing or thriving on their learning programme and calls for **special educational provision**. This includes:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than peers
- A disability that hinders access to educational facilities
- Conditions such as dyslexia, ADHD, autism, sensory impairments, chronic illnesses, and mental health difficulties
- A disability which affects their social or emotional development.

### 3. Admissions

Devonshire House School is academically selective, but we are committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not disadvantaged during the admissions process, provided their needs can be reasonably met within our school setting.

Provision for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) aligns with the statutory requirements of the EYFS Framework (July 2025), ensuring early identification of SEND and appropriate interventions to support development across the prime and specific areas of learning.



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### **3.1 Inclusive Admissions Principles**

We warmly welcome applications from pupils with SEND and follow the Equality Act 2010 and Independent School Standards (ISSRs) to ensure everyone is treated fairly and equally, regardless of their gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity or learning need.

Our goal is to understand each child's unique strengths and needs as early as possible, so we can plan the right support and reasonable adjustments from the start.

We know that some children's needs may not be fully identified before joining us, or may develop over time. If this happens, we work closely with families to assess and respond to these evolving needs together.

### **3.2 Pre-Entry Process**

- Parents are asked to disclose any known SEND, learning difficulties, or disabilities during the application process. This includes sharing reports from educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, or other professionals.
- Where appropriate, the Head of Learning Support and relevant SENDCO will meet with parents to discuss the child's profile and determine whether the school can provide suitable support.
- Reasonable adjustments may be made to the admissions process itself (e.g. assessment format, environment) to ensure fair access.
- Admission into the nursery may involve a home visit or taster day in school to assess how their play and interact with other children so their needs can be suitably met.

### **3.3 Conditional Offers and Support Planning**

- Offers of a place may be **conditional** on the school's ability to meet the child's needs through reasonable adjustments and existing resources.
- In some cases, the school may recommend pre-entry tuition, additional assessments, or a phased transition to ensure the child is set up for success.
- If bespoke or intensive support is required beyond reasonable adjustments, this may be discussed transparently with parents and may incur additional costs.

### **3.4 Limitations of Provision**

- At Devonshire House, we strive to support every pupil as fully as possible. However, as an independent school that is not listed under Section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014, we are not legally required to provide all the specific support detailed in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), even if our school is named in the plan. We do, however, follow the Equality Act 2010



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and are committed to making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils to ensure everyone feels included and valued.

- We want to be open with families about what we can offer. If a child's needs go beyond what can be met through reasonable adjustments and our existing resources - such as requiring intensive or highly specialist support - we may not be able to admit them, as we want to ensure every pupil receives the care and attention they deserve.
- We also ask families to share all relevant information about their child's special educational needs or disabilities during the admissions process. This helps us work together to make the best decisions for each child.
- If important details are not shared, and we later find that we cannot meet a child's needs, we may need to withdraw the offer of a place or ask for a pupil to leave. We always aim to handle these situations sensitively and in partnership with families.

We value open communication with families and aim to build strong partnerships from the outset. All decisions regarding admissions and SEND support are made in the best interests of the child, with sensitivity and professionalism.

### 4. Identification and Assessment

- Pupils are assessed on entry and monitored through standardised assessments and teacher observations.
- The **Assess–Plan–Do–Review** cycle is used to determine appropriate support.
- The **Bell Foundation Framework** may be used for EAL pupils to distinguish language needs from SEND.
- For EYFS pupils, observation-based assessment and the Early Years Outcomes guidance are used alongside the Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle.

### 5. Stages of Provision

Devonshire House follows a **graduated approach** to SEND support:

- **Assess:** Teachers and SENDCOs identify needs through observation, data, and diagnostic tools.
- **Plan:** Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are created in collaboration with teachers, parents, and pupils.
- **Do:** Support is delivered through targeted interventions, in-class strategies, or small group work.
- **Review:** Progress is reviewed termly, and provision is adjusted as needed.

### 6. Registers

Devonshire House maintains two distinct registers to monitor and support pupils with additional needs:



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### 6.1 Learning Support Register

This register includes pupils who:

- Have mild or emerging learning needs.
- May have a diagnosis or identified learning difficulty, but whose needs can be met effectively through **Quality First Teaching (QFT)**.
- Benefit from inclusive classroom strategies such as differentiation, scaffolding, structured talk, and multisensory approaches.
- May receive occasional small-group support, but do not require a formal Individual Education Plan (IEP).

These pupils are monitored termly by class teachers and the Learning Support team. Placement on the Learning Support Register reflects the school's commitment to early intervention and inclusive practice.

### 6.2 SEND Register

This register is reserved for pupils who:

- Require **additional, personalised support beyond QFT**.
- Have a diagnosed special educational need or disability that substantially affects their ability to access learning.
- Require a formal **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** with specific, measurable targets and strategies.

Placement on the SEND Register is based on professional judgement and evidence that the pupil's needs cannot be met solely through QFT. Only a **small number of pupils** should be placed on this register.

### 6.3 Movement Between Registers

Pupils may move between the Learning Support and SEND Registers depending on their evolving needs and progress. Movement is guided by ongoing assessment, teacher feedback, and collaboration with parents and specialists. For example, a pupil on the Learning Support Register may be moved to the SEND Register if their needs become more complex and require targeted intervention. Conversely, a pupil on the SEND Register may transition to the Learning Support Register if they make sustained progress and no longer require an IEP. This flexible approach ensures that support remains responsive and appropriate to each pupil's profile.

### 6.4 EHCP Documentation

Where a pupil is being assessed for an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**:

- Parents at Devonshire House typically commission an external EHCP specialist to prepare the application.



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- The **Head of Learning Support** and/ or **SENC**O provide supporting documentation, including evidence of interventions, progress data, IEPs, and professional observations.
- The school collaborates with families and professionals to support the pupil as far as is reasonably possible within the school's resources.
- For pupils with an EHCP, the school participates in the statutory annual review process. This includes convening or attending the review meeting, updating progress against outcomes, and submitting the review paperwork to the Local Authority within the required timeframe. Where the Local Authority provides full or partial funding, the school ensures compliance with reporting obligations and works in partnership with parents and professionals to agree any amendments to the plan.

As Devonshire House is not a Section 41 school, we are not legally required to provide all the specific support detailed in an EHCP, even if our school is named in the plan. Any support we offer for pupils with EHCPs depends on our capacity to meet the needs described. If the EHCP requests provision that goes beyond what we can reasonably offer, we will always discuss this openly with families and explore alternative arrangements together.

## 7. Provision

**Tier 1:** Quality First Teaching (universal strategies in class)

**Tier 2:** Targeted small-group interventions (usually within the classroom)

**Tier 3:** Intensive 1:1 support (in-class or outside class), usually privately funded

**Tier 4:** EHCP-level provision (where feasible within school resources)

### 7.1 Quality First Teaching (QFT)

At Devonshire House, we believe that high-quality, inclusive teaching is the foundation for supporting all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). This approach, known as Quality First Teaching (QFT), ensures that every child receives excellent classroom instruction tailored to their individual needs.

Quality First Teaching includes:

- Differentiated instruction: Lessons and activities are adapted to suit different learning styles, abilities, and interests.
- Scaffolded learning: Support structures are provided to help pupils access the curriculum and develop independence.
- Clear lesson objectives and high expectations: Teachers set ambitious but achievable goals for every pupil.
- Ongoing assessment: Teachers regularly check understanding and adjust teaching to ensure progress.
- Inclusive strategies: A range of approaches are used, such as visual aids, multisensory resources, structured talk, and group work.



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- Personalised feedback: Pupils receive constructive developmental feedback and encouragement and are able to provide their own feedback to our tutors on what has gone well or what could be even better if
- Supportive classroom environment: Resources and routines are organised to help all pupils feel secure and able to learn.

Quality First Teaching is the responsibility of every teacher and is the first step in meeting the needs of pupils who may require additional support. Most pupils with SEND will make progress through QFT, and only a small number will need further, targeted interventions.

### **7.2 1:1 Support**

Devonshire House School recognises that a small number of pupils may require individualised adult support in the classroom to access learning effectively. While most pupils make progress through Quality First Teaching and targeted interventions, some may benefit from more intensive assistance.

As a wholly independent school, Devonshire House is not funded by the Local Authority and is not legally obligated to provide 1:1 support, even where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The school does not employ dedicated teaching assistants for individual pupils unless this support is privately funded.

Where the Head of Learning Support, in consultation with the relevant SENDCO and teaching staff, determines that 1:1 support is necessary:

- The school will source a suitable candidate and will ensure they have been suitable vetted for working in a regulated school environment before commencement of their role to meet our safer recruitment procedures.
- Final approval for the selected candidate is contingent upon a successful interview with the parents.
- If the parents agree to proceed, they will be responsible for funding the 1:1 support in addition to school fees.

This arrangement ensures that the pupil receives appropriate support while maintaining the school's staffing standards and safeguarding expectations.

If parents decline the recommendation for 1:1 support and all other reasonable strategies have been exhausted, the school may determine that it is no longer able to meet the child's needs. In such cases, the school reserves the right to request that the child be withdrawn, at the discretion of the Head.

### **7.3 Assistance from External Agencies**

Devonshire House School works collaboratively with a range of external professionals, including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and other specialists who may support pupils with SEND. These



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professionals can provide valuable insights and recommendations to inform provision, particularly where further assessment or specialist input is required.

Where parents choose to engage an external professional, it is their responsibility to:

- Arrange the consultation and assessment independently.
- Cover all associated costs.
- Share relevant documentation with the school.

The school will consider external reports carefully but does not automatically implement all recommendations. Reports must be supported by evidence observed within the school setting. The Head of Learning Support and SENDCOs will review the findings and determine which recommendations are appropriate and feasible within the school's resources and context.

Where appropriate, the Learning Support team may carry out informal or diagnostic assessments to explore a pupil's learning profile. These may help identify areas of difficulty and inform next steps. Feedback from these assessments is shared with parents and class teachers. If further investigation is warranted, the school may recommend that parents seek a full assessment from an Educational Psychologist or other specialist. While the SENDCOs can advise on suitable professionals, they do not provide formal diagnoses.

## 7.4 Auxiliary Aids and Technology

Devonshire House School recognises that some pupils may benefit from the use of auxiliary aids or specialist equipment to access the curriculum effectively. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Reading pens
- Noise-cancelling headphones
- Induction loops
- Sloping boards
- Specialist seating or writing tools

Requests for such equipment are considered on a **case-by-case basis**, taking into account:

- The nature and severity of the pupil's need
- The educational benefit of the equipment
- The disadvantage posed by not having access to it
- The school's available resources
- The potential for funding from external sources (e.g. Local Authority)

As an independent school, Devonshire House is not automatically required to provide auxiliary aids, and provision is not guaranteed. In many cases, parents may be asked to purchase or contribute to the cost of equipment, particularly where the item is specific to their child's individual needs and not part of general classroom provision.



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The Head of Learning Support will advise families on appropriate equipment and, where necessary, provide guidance on sourcing items. The school will ensure that any equipment used is safe, appropriate, and integrated into the pupil's learning environment.

### 7.5 Pupil Use of Laptops

Devonshire House School recognises that for some pupils, the use of a laptop can significantly improve access to learning and enable them to demonstrate their knowledge more effectively. Laptop use is considered an individualised support measure and is only approved where there is a clear educational need such as difficulties with writing speeds or presentation of work where fine motor skills are a challenge.

Permission to use a laptop in school will only be granted if:

- It is recommended in a formal Educational Psychologist's Assessment (EPA) or the Head of Learning Support has reviewed the case and determined that laptop use is appropriate.
- The pupil demonstrates sufficient independence and technical competence.

Laptop use is generally not approved for pupils below **Year 3**, except in exceptional circumstances. Once approved, the pupil and their parents/carers will be required to sign a **Laptop Agreement** outlining expectations for responsible use

## 8. Access Arrangements for Public and Internal Examinations

Devonshire House School is committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are able to access assessments fairly and demonstrate their true academic potential. Access arrangements are adjustments made to the examination process to reduce disadvantage without compromising the integrity of the assessment.

The **Head of Learning Support**, in collaboration with the **Senior Leadership Team**, is responsible for reviewing and coordinating access arrangements for all internal assessments and any public examinations pupils may sit before transitioning to senior schools.

### 8.1 Eligibility and Evidence

Access arrangements are considered where:

- There is a clear and documented history of need
- The arrangement reflects the pupil's **normal way of working** in the classroom
- There is supporting evidence from teachers and, where appropriate, a **recent Educational Psychologist's Assessment (EPA)**

To be considered for formal access arrangements, the EPA must:



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- Be conducted within the last **two years**
- Include standardised scores and recommendations that align with JCQ criteria
- Be supported by internal evidence of classroom practice

Older reports may provide helpful context but cannot be used as the sole basis for access arrangements. The school must demonstrate that the pupil routinely uses the recommended support in lessons and assessments.

### 8.2 Types of Access Arrangements

Common arrangements include:

- Extra time
- Use of a word processor (computer / laptop/ tablet)
- Supervised rest breaks
- Reader or computer reader
- Scribe

All arrangements must be in place **well before any formal assessments** and must reflect the pupil's usual classroom practice. The school maintains detailed records to ensure compliance with JCQ guidelines and to support pupils in their transition to senior schools.

### 8.3 Parental Role

Parents are encouraged to share relevant documentation and discuss concerns with the Head of Learning Support. While recommendations from external professionals are considered, access arrangements are determined by the school based on JCQ criteria and internal evidence.

## 9. Charging for Support

As an independent school, Devonshire House may charge for support that exceeds reasonable adjustments, especially if:

- It is intensive or bespoke
- It involves external professionals
- It is not covered by an EHCP

Charges are discussed transparently with parents.

## 10. Pupil Voice and Wellbeing

- Pupils are involved in setting and reviewing IEP targets.
- Termly feedback is collected to inform provision.
- Social integration and emotional wellbeing are prioritised.



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### **11. Staff Training**

- Ongoing QFT CPD
- Annual CPD on inclusive teaching and SEND awareness
- SEND induction module for new staff
- Ongoing support from the Learning Support team

### **12. Transition**

Devonshire House School recognises that effective transition planning is essential to ensure continuity of support and pupil wellbeing. At the end of each academic year:

- The **SENDCO** meets with each pupil's new teacher(s) to share relevant SEND information, including current IEPs, strategies, and progress updates.
- Internal handover meetings are held between SENDCOs to ensure smooth transitions between phases of the school.
- Where pupils are moving on to a new school, and with **parental consent**, the Head of Learning Support will liaise with the receiving school to share relevant SEND documentation and insights to support a successful transition.
- Where appropriate, pupils are offered a taster day or transition visit to familiarise themselves with the environment, staff, and routines. These visits are planned in collaboration with parents and the receiving setting to reduce anxiety and promote confidence.

This process ensures that pupils' needs are understood and supported from the outset of each new academic stage.

### **13. Monitoring and Evaluation of Policy and Provision**

The effectiveness of SEND provision at Devonshire House is monitored continuously and evaluated annually. Success is measured by:

- The **early and accurate identification** of pupils' learning needs
- Pupils making **appropriate progress** against their IEP targets
- The use of **specific, measurable, and achievable goals** within IEPs
- Strong **collaboration with external professionals** where appropriate
- Positive **feedback from pupils and families** regarding support and outcomes

The Head of Learning Support oversees the review of this policy and ensures that provision remains responsive, inclusive, and aligned with current best practice.