



**Nurturing to Learn**

# **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy**

September 2025

Governing Body Ratification Date: 30.09.25
Issue Date:
Next Review Date: September 2026
Responsible Person(s):

## Elms School Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

**This policy is written in line with the requirements of:**

- **Children and Families Act 2014**  
(In particular Section 69) –
  - (i) the arrangements for the admission of disabled persons as pupils at the school
  - (ii) the steps taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils.
  - (iii) the facilities provided to assist access to the school by disabled pupils.
  
- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 – 25 Years 2015**
  
- **Equality Act 2010**  
Protected Characteristics and Reasonable Adjustments.
  - (i) increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school's curriculum.
  - (ii) improving the physical environment of the school for the purpose of increasing the extent to which disabled pupils are able to take advantage of education and benefits, facilities and services provided or offered by the school
  
- **Schools Admissions Code September 2021**
  
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014**
  
- **The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014**  
(Regulation 51) – The School's provision and approaches towards support pupils with SEN, including:
  - (i) The assessment of and for specific provisions
  - (ii) Adaptation and support required for pupils to successfully engage in the curriculum and learning environment.
  - (ii) Identifying the support that is available for improving the emotional, mental and social development of pupils with SEN.
  - (iii) Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with SEN.
  - (iv) The arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN about, and involving such parents in, the education of their child. (iv) How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with SEN and in supporting the families of such pupils.
  
- **Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions 2015**
  
- **Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024**

## **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**

Elms School is a Rights Respecting School thereby this policy ensures that the following rights are acknowledged:

- Article 3 (Best interests of the child). The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.
- Article 12 (Respect for the views of the child). Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.
- Article 23 (Children with a disability). A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.
- Article 28 (Right to education). Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free and different forms of secondary education must be available to every child.

## **Key Principles**

Elms School is dedicated to providing a broad, relevant and balanced curriculum based on the special educational needs of individual pupils.

Elms School's provision ensures maximum access and attainment, within and beyond the National Curriculum, by deploying available resources such that pupils receive the support, and have the opportunities required, to foster their personal, social, behavioural, cultural, moral and educational development.

It is the aim of Elms School to ensure that pupils realise their full potential and therefore leave the school best equipped to succeed in the next stage of their lives.

Elms School's ethos and culture effectively provides pupils with an environment that allows them to realise their academic, moral and social potential in a way that individual pupil support in the mainstream is not able to do.

It is Elms School's aim to work in partnership with pupils' parents/carers and other external agencies to provide for pupils' special educational needs.

## **Elms School- Special Educational Needs Admission**

Admission to Elms School usually follows consideration by the County Panel. Recommendation for a school place is usually based upon recognition that the pupil will make greater progress and speedier development within the curriculum and resource structures of the school. In every case a placement at Elms School is a positive step in furthering the pupil's achievements. All pupils at Elms School have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) that recommends placement in a special school with small teaching groups and individual learning plans.

Some pupils are transferred directly from other special schools following home moves or other special circumstances.

All admissions to the school comply with the legal requirements as outlined within the Equality Act 2010. As such, Elms School does not discriminate against a pupil

or prospective pupil by treating them less favourably because of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, or gender reassignment.

Furthermore, Elms School will fulfil its legal duty to make 'reasonable adjustment in line with the nine protected characteristic, as outlined within the Equality Act 2010. This means that adjustments which are necessary and reasonable, for the benefit of current or prospective pupil(s), will be made once identified. However, the legislation explicitly states that schools are not obliged to anticipate and make adjustments for every imaginable disability and need only consider general reasonable adjustments. Additionally, it is legally recognised that there will be times when adjustments cannot be made because to do so would have a detrimental effect on other pupils and would therefore not be reasonable.

### **Elms School- Special Educational Needs Provision**

Elms School caters for pupils with SEMH needs in the South Kent area. They may also have additional needs including:

- Autism
- ADHD
- Communication and interaction difficulties
- Cognition and Learning Difficulties
- Processing difficulties.
- Sensory processing difficulties
- Trauma

Elms School is an essential part of the County's special needs provision, providing a service not only to the community and its pupils, but also filling a part of the County's continuum of service to children with SEN. By effectively meeting needs for a core of pupils, the school supports the County, in meeting its responsibilities to include all children.

### **Identification and Assessment of Pupils with SEN**

All pupils at Elms School will have been identified as having SEN and been assessed prior to starting at Elms School. They will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which gives full details of their Special Educational Needs and the provision necessary to support the pupil.

EHCPs contains outcomes, for pupils to address their areas of need, and these are broken down into shorter-term targets, which are reviewed with parents, class teams and multi-agency partners 3 times a year.

An EHCP annual review is held yearly with parents/carers, school and the young person, in which the young person's progress is reviewed, and outcomes can be amended.

If a pupil's needs have changed, the school/ parent can ask for these to be re-assessed by an appropriate professional, such as an Educational Psychologist, Therapist or Consultant, in order that the Education, Health and Care Plan can be amended.

## **Objectives of this Policy**

This policy describes:

- The provision made by the school to meet the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs
- The means whereby these needs are identified monitored and met.

The policy also identifies:

- Other school policies and documents that detail relevant aspects of the school, its provision, organisation, and development.
- The procedure for considering complaints about the school's SEN provision.
- The criteria for its evaluation.

## **Meeting objectives**

Elms School undertakes a process of continuous review and improvement, and ensures that this is channelled into the achievement of its objectives through:

- The creation of development plans containing goals.
- Producing an annual School Improvement Plan (SIP), with clear targets and clearly defined responsibilities.
- Maintaining a range of policies with periodic review dates, ensuring that the school can respond effectively to changes in the needs of its pupils and staff.

## **Elms School Curriculum**

It is the entitlement of all pupils, regardless of disabilities, gender or race, to have access to the national curriculum, its subjects, themes, dimensions and skills.

All pupils have access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, comprising a fully differentiated National Curriculum. Pupils work at the level appropriate to their attainments and achievements, plus a wider curriculum in line with individual needs. Some pupils may also be identified to receive additional 1:1 or small group interventions, dependent on their current individual needs.

This wider curriculum provides additional learning experiences, which add breadth to the curriculum with particular emphasis on life skills and social/emotional development. This flexible approach to curriculum planning alters its balance depending on the changing needs of the child at different times and allows a greater emphasis on:

- Therapeutic and other specialised support
- Inclusion activities
- Vocational and work-related activities.

Pupils are supported by a highly structured pastoral system which enables them to develop socially and emotionally as they progress through school. Elms School considers the social and emotional provisions offered to be an essential part in preparing pupils to learn effectively, as well as key elements necessary for all pupil to lead successful and fulfilling adult lives. As a result, the social and emotional

provisions offered are regularly reviewed and assessed, often on an individualised basis by staff across the school. The school curriculum is overseen by the Headteacher, in collaboration with the school's Senior Leadership Team.

### **Curriculum Pathway and Assessment**

Elms School curriculum is set 2 years behind the age expected, to allow our pupils to access it successfully. This is then differentiated further to support our pathway 1 learners engage but also challenge our pathway 3 students.

Elms School has three curriculum pathways that have been created to meet the different needs of our students.

Pathway 1- Entry Level Pathway

Pathway 2- Functional Skills Pathway

Pathway 3- GCSE Pathway

Our Year 9, 10 and 11 pupils also have the opportunity to achieve a Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award as well as AQA Unit awards.

Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils follow the engagement model. Evidence of progress is captured using photographs and video.

Year 3- Year 8 use the 21 steps to assess pupils progress and ensure that pupils are being challenged within the correct pathway.

Year 9- Year 11 use an Elms assessment tool created within school that shows the progress towards the qualification targets.

### **Inclusion**

All pupils are included in school life and this is recorded annually at their Annual Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Reviews. These plans contain information relating to specific interventions required for pupils to achieve their outcomes in the areas of Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Social and Emotional Mental Health, and/or Sensory and Physical. It is a statutory requirement that these outcomes be reviewed at least once per academic year. However, Elms School ensures that these outcomes are reviewed up to three times per academic year so that professional judgements can be made on a regular basis and parents/carers are aware of their child's progress and evolving needs. This process is overseen and quality-assured by the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion.

### **Interventions**

Elms School offers a range of interventions to address pupils' identified learning, communication, social and emotional, and holistic needs. These include:-

- **English and Maths interventions**
- **Read Write Inc (RWI) and Fresh Start**
- **Speech and language therapy (SALT)**
- **LEGO therapy**

- **THRIVE-** a dynamic programme for supporting the emotional development of learners.
- **Attention and Listening Games:** Fun activities that improve focus and listening skills.
- **Attention Autism:** Engages children through exciting activities to build focus.
- **Clever Fingers:** Activities that build hand strength and fine motor skills.
- **Comic Strip Conversations:** Helps children understand social situations through drawings.
- **Communication Colour Cards:** Visual tools that support clear and effective communication.
- **Communication Scripts:** Provides set phrases to help children communicate clearly.
- **Dance Break:** Fun movement sessions to energise and refresh.
- **Drawing and Talking:** A gentle therapy that helps children express feelings through drawing.
- **Fizzy Hands:** Strengthens hand muscles through exercises and games.
- **Handwriting:** Focusses on developing neat and legible writing.
- **Language Through Colour:** Uses colours to teach sentence structure and grammar.
- **Memory Games:** Boosts recall and cognitive skills with fun challenges.
- **Mindfulness:** Teaches relaxation and focus to manage stress.
- **Outdoor Learning:** Engages children with nature to build confidence and teamwork.
- **Reading Comprehension:** Supports understanding of stories and texts.
- **Restorative Conversations:** Helps children resolve conflicts and rebuild relationships.
- **Sensory Diet:** Offers activities to help children stay calm and focused.
- **Social Stories:** Prepares children for events by explaining what to expect.
- **Spelling and Language:** Targeted help with word-building and understanding language.
- **Structured/Unstructured Play:** Balances guided and free play to develop creativity and social skills.
- **Task Management:** Builds organisation and independence by breaking tasks into small steps.

- **Times Tables:** Fun methods to master multiplication facts.
- **Trauma-Informed 1:1:** This offers personalised support to help children feel safe and build trust after experiencing trauma.
- **Write Dance:** Combines music and movement to support writing skills.
- **Zones of Regulation:** Teaches children to understand and manage their emotions using colour-coded zones.

All interventions are overseen and reviewed by the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion on a termly basis, in collaboration with intervention practitioners and the Senior Leadership Team.

### **Elms School Provisions**

Elms School is dedicated to the provision of a broad, balanced, and relevant education for pupils whose needs are best met through:

- A structured and differentiated curriculum with carefully established and regularly reviewed teaching plans and attainable targets to provide maximum possible access to the National Curriculum. This is provided via the different pathways.
- Frequent opportunities to learn and develop basic skills across the whole curriculum.
- The continuous development of independence skills.
- Carefully structured and supported opportunities to develop access skills to enable integration into the group, the class, the school, and the community.
- The provision of EHCP clear, achievable, and frequently reviewed targets which reflect the concerns and needs of the pupil, parents, and other agencies.
- Building of self-esteem through the recognition of pupils' achievements
- A high level of tutorial and pastoral support and guidance within a clearly defined framework of expectations, rewards and sanctions.

Elms School provides this within a caring, considerate, and effective school community. All provisions offered are overseen and reviewed by the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion in collaboration with the school's Senior Leadership Team.

Facilities at Elms School are described in the school website. They include:

- Subject Specialist Classrooms- Design Technology Room, Food Technology Room, Science Room, Computing Suite, as sports hall and an Art Room.
- Speech and Language 1:1 working Room with Speech and Language specialist
- Sensory Rooms (in primary and secondary)
- Sensory Circuit Room
- Physical regulation room with padded areas (in primary and secondary)
- Therapeutic Space for Trauma Informed and Thrive 1:1/ small group sessions.

- Grounds which are maintained to provide pupil access to natural areas on the playground and the field both enhancing the working environment and enabling a broader curriculum to be followed.

Elms School has its own kitchen, providing a midday meal which facilitates the provision of special diets where appropriate. Elms School provides breakfast to all pupils.

### **Gifted and Talented**

**'Gifted'** pupils are defined as pupils who are significantly more able academically in one or more subjects.

**'Talented'** pupils are defined as pupil who are more able artistically, in sports or in performance.

The Department for Education (DfE) has previously estimated that within a school population, 10-15% of pupils are identified as gifted and talented. Gifted pupils are usually within the top 10% of each year group in academic subjects. The identification of pupils as 'Gifted' or 'Talented' in specific subject areas will be judged in relation to the context of the school, not according to average age-expectations.

Pupils identified as 'Gifted and Talented', along with the interventions or strategies required to challenge and extend their abilities further. The knowledge and skills of these pupils will be identified, met, and evaluated by individual subject teachers.

This is being developed in areas such as Gymnastics in which identified talented pupils have sessions with an External Gymnastics Coach to support their progress. Overall monitoring for this provision is the responsibility of the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion.

### **Assessment during enrolment at Elms School**

The Code of Practice emphasises the need to identify pupils needs at the earliest possible time. To arrive at this stage pupils will have seen a variety of professionals who have investigated the root of the child's difficulties in learning.

The Local Authority will have deemed that a child may be suitable through a clear assessment and referral process which results in papers being submitted to the school as part of the consultation process.

Before a pupil comes to Elms School, they and their carer will be invited for a meeting with the Headteacher to assess their needs.

During the first six – twelve weeks of a pupil's time at Elms School:

- Further information/ assessment/ advice may be sought from agencies previously involved or indicated.
- Internal assessment of basic skills and attainment are made using our assessment systems.
- Staff assessments and observations are made.

A profile of need is established, which indicates the range identified for the pupil. This includes:

- Where possible, a pupil's view of their needs.
- The parent/carer's view of their child's needs.
- A summary of outside agency involvement.
- The school's view of the pupil's needs.

This is updated at an internal annual review held with parent/carer and school in which the pupils' outcomes are reviewed and adaptations of small targets and provision in line with the schools offering and next steps are made.

### **Continued Assessment at Elms School**

Pupils' behaviours are logged via CPOMS, with detailed accounts by the class teacher or TA. Whenever possible the behaviour observations include antecedents and consequences. The logs are reviewed weekly, according to the needs of the pupil by the Pupil Support Team at their weekly meeting.

Frequency, intensity, and persistence may all trigger interventions, which include:

- Contact with parents.
- Individually negotiated behaviour management plans: pupils, parents and outside agencies may all be included.
- Additional curriculum interventions
- Behaviour support Plans
- Pastoral support plans.
- Alternative curriculum
- Part time Curriculum
- The involvement of outside agencies (child guidance, SPS, CAMHS, Health Authority) to establish causes and/or recommend responses.

### **Monitoring Pupil Progress**

Elms School incorporates review as an essential theme of all its activity.

- Curriculum Programmes of Study and Schemes of Work are reviewed regularly.
- Pastoral records are reviewed regularly, and patterns of behaviour identified which may trigger a range of interventions, including behaviour logging, involvement of parents, referral to outside agencies, behavioural plans with carefully negotiated rewards and sanctions.
- Pupils are actively involved, wherever possible in lessons, in reviewing their progress.
- Pupil progress within interventions is monitored by the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion and progress recorded on a termly basis by intervention practitioners.
- Annual reviews and transition planning meetings involving parents, pupils and outside agencies, where appropriate.
- Transitions will be supported through each phase of the school and will be adapted to meet the evolving needs of all pupils.
- Teachers/Form Tutors and TAs may continue to maintain responsibility for their class into the next phase.

- Pupils in KS4 will be supported through career guidance to identify next steps in their education e.g. college or apprenticeships and will be supported to develop their skills for independent living and/or adult life.
- Targets are shared with parents and pupils at parents' evenings as well as Annual reviews and weekly phone calls.

The results of these reviews are available to all staff.

Strategic review takes place through the regular review of the school improvement and budget maintenance plans.

### **Consulting and Involving Children in their Education**

All pupils and students at Elms School have been identified as having special educational needs and requiring specialist provision. In line with the focus within the SEND Code of Practice, Elms School pupils are consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them. Pupils are invited to contribute towards their Annual Review of EHCP and also will be invited to attend part, or all of, the review. Although parents/ carers will take the lead in advocating for their children, the pupils have opportunities to engage with the process and share their views, becoming more involved as they progress through the school.

### **Consulting and Involving Parents in their child's Education**

All parents of pupils at Elms School are invited to discuss the progress of their children throughout the year and receive a report when their child's review is due.

Parents are invited to contribute to, in writing, and attend an annual review of the EHCP during the year which, wherever possible, will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

Parents have weekly calls/ emails with their child's class teachers where the child's week is discussed. Parents are also invited in for meetings with Senior Leaders, where appropriate, to discuss steps forward for their child, if it identified that provision needs to change. An End of Year Report is sent to parents of their child's academic levels and achievement as well as an in year report which will show whether they are on track or exceeding across the curriculum.

### **Supporting Children With Health Needs**

Initially, the school will attempt to make arrangements to deliver suitable education for children with health needs who cannot attend school.

- The Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion will liaise with parents/carers to put in place suitable arrangements to ensure the best continuity of learning possible.
- The Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion will monitor arrangements between home and school, including liaison with Subject Leaders and teachers.
- The form or class teacher will ensure that appropriate work is sent home or

sent to hospital schools where this is relevant.

- The form or class teacher will monitor the student's engagement with the work and liaise with the student's parents/carers and teachers where necessary.
- Where a student is not attending due to ill health, it is important that they feel supported in their learning. It is also important that each student's situation is assessed on an individual basis and that the student's needs are met accordingly.
- The Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion will also be responsible for ensuring a supported reintegration of the student back into school after an extended period of illness. Again, this will include close liaison with parents/carers, attendance lead, subject leaders, teachers, and the Local Authority.
- When a student returns to school after an extended period of absence due to ill health, the Head of Inclusion and form/class teacher will closely monitor the student for at least the first term and support their settling back into their learning and school life.
- Should the student require further support, the Assistant Headteachers for Inclusion will make the necessary referrals, either to in-school support programmes or outside agencies. Again, this will be done in consultation with parents/carers.

If the local authority makes arrangements:

If the school cannot make suitable arrangements, the LA will become responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would not receive suitable education without such provision.

The school will make a referral to the Local Authority's Kent Health Needs Education Service (KHNES). This service should accept and act on their following criteria:

- Medical needs are such that the young person has missed 15 days of schooling (consecutive or cumulative).
- The young person's health has significantly reduced their ability to access their home school full time and this is reflected in their attendance record.
- A senior medical professional (such as a consultant, mental health practitioner etc) is providing support, diagnosis and/or advice. This applies to students whose cases are managed by hospitals within Kent as well as in more specialist hospitals in London and across the country; Please Note: GP referral is not sufficient.
- A change in medical advice or medication has meant that a young person requires increased medical review, intervention, support or flexibility to allow them to attend education full time.
- Health need can mean either physical health need, or mental health condition meaning it is disrupting the young person's ability to attend school full time.
- A young person has been discharged from tier 4 Mental Health Service services and requires on-going support before full time reintegration to school.
- When further dialogue post-referral is required between KHNES and schools there may be the need for further discussion with medical professionals to

ensure correct decisions are reached in the best interest of all young people.

In cases where the local authority makes arrangements, the school will:

- Work constructively with the local authority, providers, relevant agencies, and parents to ensure the best outcomes for the student.
- Share information with the local authority and relevant health services as required.
- Liaise with the alternative provider over planning examinations and exam course requirements where appropriate. (Awarding bodies may make special arrangements for students with permanent or long-term disabilities and learning difficulties, or temporary disabilities and illnesses. Applications for such arrangements will be submitted by the school, or LA if more appropriate, as soon as possible.
- Help make sure that the provision offered to the student is as effective as possible and that the child can be reintegrated back into school successfully.

When reintegration is anticipated, work with the local authority to:

- Plan for consistent provision during and after the period of education outside the school, allowing the student to access the same curriculum and materials that they would have used in school as far as possible.
- Enable the student to stay in touch with school life (e.g. through newsletters, emails, invitations to school events or internet links to lessons from their school).
- Create individually tailored reintegration plans for each child returning to school.

Consider whether any reasonable adjustments need to be made.

### **Staffing**

Staff across the school are dedicated to raising pupils' attainment.

Secondary subject Teaching staff carry a subject expertise, thereby acting as resource points for curriculum areas lower down in the school.

Individual teachers have attended a wide range of post graduate courses and all teachers or those in teacher training, HLTAs and TAs follow our entitlement training courses.

### **Staffing Policies and Partnership**

Working with other agencies:

- Elms School maintains good working relationships with outside agencies and incorporates their work in the actions and objectives defined in each pupil's EHCP.
- Representatives of the school attend multi-agency meetings at every practical opportunity, sending apologies and requesting minutes if representation is not possible.

### **Staffing and Staff Development**

Elms School recognises that:

- Special education experience is of value, but mainstream school experience is also important for staff supporting pupils in these provisions.
- The role of Teaching Assistants is maximised to allow increased intervention against specific targets.
- It is necessary to continue investing in staff development in different areas of teaching and learning, in order to promote both everyday teaching skills and specialist knowledge. Staff are specially trained in a variety of areas, including behaviour management, therapeutic approaches, specific SEN conditions and mentoring/coaching.

School management is made up of Senior and Middle Leadership Teams, who in turn support the management roles of all staff.

### **Professional Development**

Elms School's staff development ensures that staff are supported in the development of skills, understanding and expertise, such that they may both better provide for the needs of pupils, and enhance their personal professional development. Performance management and the School Improvement Plan (SIP) inform the allocation of staff training resources in response to need.

All staff are trained in Team Teach, which supports the de-escalation of our pupils and ensures they can keep the learning environment safe. Elms School has two trained members of staff who can lead training to ensure that new members of staff are trained efficiently when starting their employment.

All staff have a right to in service training. This is supported within the context of the SIP and the need for personal/ professional development.

Personal and professional development is available through a referral system, whereby staff may make application for training. Courses/ training which furthers the expertise of staff as applied to pupils with SEN are favoured in this case.

Whole school development points are addressed through staff development training days. Most recently staff have had training around Thrive, Trauma Informed Practice, Speech and Language and Team Teach. These are in line with the SIP and the values of the school.

### **The Governors**

The Governing Body of Elms School is committed to the principle of ensuring that the school may continue to provide an excellent level of service to its community and shows an interest in all aspects of its work.

The governors, in co-operation with the Headteacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to the provision for pupils with an EHCP, establish the appropriate staff and funding arrangements and maintain a monitoring oversight of the school's work.

The Governors are particularly keen to ensure that the pupils are provided with the highest standards of accommodation and resourcing that can be made available.

Paying due regard to ECM and FBV;

- To ensure the welfare- pastoral, social, behavioural, physical, and educational needs of the pupils are met to provide continuing professional development of all staff to meet the pupils' needs.
- To ensure that appropriate resources enable the school to serve the needs of its pupils, parents, staff, and community effectively and provide good value for money.
- Fundamental British Values.
- To ensure that all complaints regarding the provision for pupils with special education needs, received from parents/carers/responsible adults, are investigated in line with the school's complaints policy. Dependent on the findings this may result in adaptations being actioned, where required and possible.