



SEND Policy

Reviewed by: Anna Greatrex and Tina Hobday

Reviewed on: September 2026

Next review: September 2027

Endorsement

Full endorsement is given to this policy by:

Name: Julian Rolton

Position: Trustee, Chair of Teaching and Learning committee

1. Aims and Objectives

This policy sets out how Waldorf Cambridge identifies and supports pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Waldorf Cambridge is a non-association independent school. Our core regulatory framework is therefore the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. We also have duties under the Equality Act 2010, and we work with local authorities in relation to pupils who have, or may need, an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

Our aims are to:

- Ensure every pupil, including those with SEND, can access a high-quality, inclusive education.
- Identify and meet the needs of pupils with SEND as early as possible.
- Involve pupils and parents fully in decisions affecting them, following the principle of co-production.
- Help pupils with SEND achieve their potential and make a successful transition to adulthood.
- Foster confidence, independence, and wellbeing for all pupils.
- Be clear and honest with families about what we can and cannot provide.
- Comply with all legislation and regulatory standards that apply to us.

2. Vision and Values

Our school, guided by Rudolf Steiner's educational philosophy, nurtures the head, heart and hands, valuing the whole child. We believe inclusion begins with belonging, safety and dignity. Every pupil contributes uniquely to our community.

We are committed to:

- A fully inclusive environment within the limits of our staffing and facilities.
- Recognising diversity, neurodiversity, and difference as strengths.
- Reducing barriers to learning and participation.
- Upholding equality and promoting positive relationships between all members of the school.

3. Legislation, Guidance and Regulatory Framework

Because we are an independent school, some duties that apply to maintained schools and academies do not apply to us, and others apply differently. This section sets out which is which, so that staff and parents are not misled about the legal position.

Legislation and regulation that applies directly to the school:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 — the standards we are registered against and inspected on.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate, the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils, and the accessibility planning duty in Schedule 10.
- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3, so far as it concerns co-operation with local authorities and pupils with EHC plans.
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, which came into force on 19 August 2024 and replaced the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026), in force from 1 September 2026.
- Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, July 2026). Chapters 1 and 2 apply to independent schools under paragraph 7(b) of the Independent School Standards.
- Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR.
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026, which received Royal Assent on 29 April 2026 and is being commenced in stages.

Guidance we adopt as good practice, although it is addressed principally to maintained schools and academies:

- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015). We follow the graduated approach, the four broad areas of need and the principle of co-production set out in the Code.
- Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs (DfE, December 2023). This replaced the January 2013 guidance.
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE, 2015).
- Allergy safety in schools (DfE, July 2026). We adopt this as our operational standard pending amendment of the Independent School Standards to extend the allergy safety duty to independent schools. It is implemented through the Whole School Allergy Safety Policy, which is owned by the school's Allergy Leads.

Forthcoming reform. The Schools White Paper Every Child Achieving and Thriving was published on 23 February 2026, alongside the consultation SEND Reform: Putting Children and Young People First, which closed on 18 May 2026. It proposes a tiered model of SEND support, Individual Support Plans, and a narrower route to EHC plans. These are proposals; they are not law. The Government has confirmed that no changes to the support provided through existing EHC plans will take effect before September 2030. This policy will be reviewed when legislation and any revised SEND Code of Practice are published.

We also refer to the Cambridgeshire Local Offer, which sets out local SEND provision and services.

4. Definitions

A pupil has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them, that is additional to or different from that normally provided for others of the same age.

A pupil has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Many pupils with a long-term medical condition are disabled for this purpose, and are therefore owed reasonable adjustments whether or not they have SEN.

5. The Four Areas of Need

SEND is grouped into four broad areas of need:

1. Communication and interaction — including speech, language and communication needs and autism.
2. Cognition and learning — including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia and general learning difficulties.
3. Social, emotional and mental health — including anxiety, ADHD, trauma and attachment difficulties.
4. Sensory and/or physical needs — including hearing or visual impairment and physical disability.

Pupils may have needs in more than one area, and needs may change over time.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The SENDCO

- Lead professional for SEND: Anna Greatrex, anna.greatrex@waldorfcambridge.uk
- Oversees the day-to-day operation of SEND provision.
- Liaises with staff, parents, and external professionals.
- Monitors and reviews provision and outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Maintains the SEND register and ensures accurate record keeping.
- Acts as the named person for pupils with health needs who cannot attend school, and for pupils with medical conditions other than allergy and asthma. Allergy and asthma safety is not part of the SENDCO role: it is owned by the school's Allergy Leads under the Whole School Allergy Safety Policy.
- Where a pupil has an allergy or asthma alongside SEND, the SENDCO works with the Allergy Leads, who complete the allergy and asthma annex to the pupil's individual healthcare plan.

There is no statutory requirement for the SENDCO in an independent school to hold the National Professional Qualification for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. The SENDCO's qualifications, training and experience are recorded in the staff competence log and reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.

The Teaching and Learning Lead

- Oversees the strategic development of SEND provision.
- Ensures the SENDCO has adequate time and resources.
- Monitors SEND spending and ensures effective deployment of staff.
- Supports early identification and quality-first teaching.

The Board of Trustees

- Ensures the school complies with the Independent School Standards and with equality legislation.
- Ensures an Accessibility Plan is in place and kept under review, as required by Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010.
- Publishes a SEN Information Report as a matter of good practice. The statutory duty to publish such a report applies to maintained schools and academies rather than to independent schools, but we consider it important for transparency with families.
- Monitors the effectiveness of SEND provision through reports from the SENDCO.

The SEND Link Trustee

- Monitors the quality and impact of SEND provision and reports to the Board.

Class Teachers

- Are responsible for the progress of all pupils in their class, including those with SEND.
- Deliver high-quality, adapted teaching as the first response to any identified need.
- Work collaboratively with the SENDCO and with parents.
- Contribute to individual healthcare plans where a pupil has a medical condition.

Parents and Carers

- Are vital partners in identifying needs and shaping provision.
- Participate in termly reviews and annual reports.
- Share relevant medical and professional reports so that support can be planned properly.

Pupils

- Are supported to share their views, strengths and aspirations.
- Contribute to target setting and review discussions in a way appropriate to their age and understanding.

7. Identifying and Assessing SEND

We use the graduated approach set out in the SEND Code of Practice, based on a repeating cycle of assess, plan, do and review:

1. Assess. Teachers and the SENDCO assess needs through observation, classroom evidence, assessment data and consultation with parents and the pupil.
2. Plan. Interventions, adjustments and outcomes are agreed with parents and the pupil and recorded in writing.
3. Do. Teachers deliver the agreed support, with guidance from the SENDCO.

4. Review. Impact is reviewed at least termly, and the cycle informs the next steps.

Early identification is prioritised through:

- Regular classroom assessment and observation.
- Developmental observation and assessment in the Kindergarten, in line with the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage.
- Liaison with parents, previous settings and external agencies.
- Attendance and wellbeing data, which can be an early indicator of unmet need.

8. Levels of Support

SEN Support. Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, we make provision that is additional to or different from that normally available, through the graduated approach. Because we are an independent school, this provision is funded from the school's own resources rather than from a delegated local authority budget, and is not recorded through the school census. Where a pupil requires one-to-one or specialist provision that carries an additional charge, this is discussed and agreed with parents in advance and confirmed in writing before it begins.

Education, Health and Care plans. Some pupils at the school hold an EHC plan maintained by their local authority. Where this is the case we contribute to annual reviews, provide evidence of progress towards the outcomes in the plan, and work with the authority and any commissioned professionals.

Requesting an EHC needs assessment. A parent or young person may ask the local authority to carry out an EHC needs assessment, and the school may bring a pupil to the authority's attention with parental consent. The SENDCO will support parents through this process, provide the evidence the authority requires, and explain the timescales and rights of appeal.

9. Admissions and EHC Plans

Waldorf Cambridge welcomes applications from pupils with SEND. Admission is subject to our published admissions arrangements and to an honest assessment of whether we can meet the pupil's needs with the staffing, facilities and expertise available to us. Where we cannot, we will say so clearly and as early as possible.

The duty in section 43 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which requires a school named in an EHC plan to admit the pupil, applies to maintained schools, academies, non-maintained special schools, and independent institutions approved under section 41 of that Act. Waldorf Cambridge is not an institution approved under section 41. A local authority may still name the school in an EHC plan, but only after consulting us, with our agreement, and where funding arrangements have been agreed.

Where the school is named in an EHC plan, we will meet the provision specified in the plan and take part in annual reviews.

10. Accessibility and Reasonable Adjustments

- The Accessibility Plan meets the requirements of Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010. It is reviewed annually and revised at least every three years.
- The plan covers access to the curriculum, access to the physical environment, and access to information.
- The school site is largely level, with widened doorways and accessible toilets.

- Reasonable adjustments are made for individual disabled pupils. These are recorded, shared with the staff who need to know, and reviewed.

11. Early Years and Transitions

Children in the Kindergarten are within the early years foundation stage. Where a child has or may have SEND, we follow this policy alongside the requirements of the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage, including the requirement to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND.

We plan transitions carefully:

- Between Kindergarten and Class 1, through joint planning and parental consultation.
- Between classes and phases, through pupil and parent meetings and structured handover.
- To new schools, by timely transfer of SEND records and liaison with receiving staff.

12. Expertise and Training

All staff receive ongoing SEND training appropriate to their role.

- The SENDCO maintains a training and competence log, reviewed annually.
- Training covers identification, adaptive teaching and inclusive practice.
- Condition-specific training is arranged where a pupil's needs require it, including training on medical conditions. Allergy awareness and emergency response training, including acute asthma, is arranged, delivered and recorded separately by the Allergy Leads and is provided to all staff at least annually.

13. Mental Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding

The school recognises that mental health difficulties can constitute a special educational need. Staff follow Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2026), which is in force from 1 September 2026, and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. All concerns are recorded and addressed through safeguarding procedures and, where appropriate, through SEND support.

Where a pupil's mental health means they are unable to attend school, the Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy applies, and mental health needs are treated in the same way as physical health needs.

14. Attendance and Pupils with SEND

Pupils with SEND are more likely than their peers to be persistently absent. Chapters 1 and 2 of Working together to improve school attendance (DfE, July 2026) apply to this school. In line with that guidance:

- Attendance data for pupils with SEND is monitored separately and reported to the Board of Trustees at least termly.
- We build relationships with families and seek to understand and remove barriers before considering any formal action.
- We do not require repeated medical evidence where a pupil's health needs are complex, long term or frequently recurring.
- Remote education is used only as a last resort, with a documented plan for return to school.
- Young carers are identified and monitored as a group requiring targeted support.

Where a pupil is unable to attend because of physical or mental health needs, the Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy applies, including the duty to make a sickness return to the local authority under regulation 13 of the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

15. Pupils with Medical Conditions

Some pupils with SEND also have medical conditions, and some pupils have medical conditions without having SEN. Arrangements for supporting pupils with medical conditions, including individual healthcare plans and the administration of medicines, are set out in the Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy. Allergy and asthma are dealt with separately in the Whole School Allergy Safety Policy, which is owned by the Allergy Leads. Where a pupil has both an EHC plan and an individual healthcare plan, the two are reviewed alongside each other, and any interaction between allergy and SEN is recorded in the plan.

16. Working with External Agencies

We collaborate with:

- Educational psychologists
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists and physiotherapists
- Child and adolescent mental health services and other mental health professionals
- Social care and early help teams
- Specialist teachers and SEND advisory services
- School nursing and community health services

17. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Provision

Effectiveness is reviewed through:

- Termly tracking of pupil progress.
- Review of assess-plan-do-review cycles.
- Parent and pupil feedback.
- Annual reviews of EHC plans.
- Attendance and exclusion data for pupils with SEND.
- SENDCO monitoring reports to the Board of Trustees.

Non-association independent schools have been inspected under Ofsted's renewed education inspection framework since January 2026, using the independent school inspection toolkit and report cards, with a revised operating guide for standard inspections in use from September 2026. Our self-evaluation of SEND provision takes account of the expectations in that toolkit, alongside compliance with the Independent School Standards. Inspectors will also consider the school's medical conditions and allergy safety policies and how well they are implemented.

18. Complaints

Concerns about SEND provision should be raised first with the class teacher or the SENDCO. If the concern is not resolved, parents should use the school's Complaints Policy, which the school is required to have and to publish under Part 7 of the Independent School Standards.

If a parent believes the school is not meeting the Independent School Standards, they may raise this with the Department for Education once the school's complaints procedure has been exhausted.

Complaints about a local authority's decisions — for example a refusal to carry out an EHC needs assessment, the content of an EHC plan, or the school named in it — are made to the local authority. Parents may use disagreement resolution and mediation services and have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

Claims of disability discrimination against the school may be brought to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) under the Equality Act 2010.

19. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the SENDCO and Teacher and Learning Lead approved by the Board of Trustees. It will also be updated immediately in response to any legislative or regulatory change, including the phased commencement of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and any revision of the Independent School Standards or the SEND Code of Practice.

The SEN Information Report is updated annually and published on the school website. This policy aligns with the school's equality objectives.

20. Related Documents

- SEN Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy
- Children with Health Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
- Whole School Allergy Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy

Further details of local SEND services can be found at:

 [Cambridgeshire Local Offer](#)