



# **The Downley School Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Annual Report 2025 - 2026**

**We place the child at the centre of all we do. We welcome all children and families. Our caring, nurturing learning environment enables all children to achieve together.**

**Learning, Growing & Succeeding Together**

## **Members of Staff Responsible:**

**Headteacher:** Leanne Dandridge  
**Chair of Governors:** Sally Perkins  
**SEND Governor:** Dorota Milner  
**SENDCo:** Charlotte Grisedale  
**Family Support Worker:** Lyn Wilding

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At **The Downley School**, we are committed to creating an inclusive environment where every child with special educational needs (SEN) is empowered to achieve their best. We use a variety of methods and tools to provide learning opportunities through adaptive teaching and by tailoring our approach to match the needs of each child. Quality teaching is central to this, alongside the understanding that some children will need additional or adapted provision to reduce barriers to learning and help them make progress.

We believe every child deserves the opportunity to thrive in a supportive and accessible learning environment, whether through adaptive teaching within the classroom or more specialised support when necessary.

This report complies with; section 69(2) of the Children and Families Act 2014 and regulation 51 and schedule 1 of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014

## 1. Types of SEND Supported at the School

At The Downley School we provide support for pupils with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including:

- **Cognition and Learning Difficulties** (e.g., specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or global learning delay).
- **Communication and Interaction Needs** (e.g., speech, language, and communication needs or autism spectrum conditions).
- **Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Difficulties** (e.g., anxiety, ADHD, or emotional regulation difficulties).
- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs** (e.g., hearing or visual impairment, or physical disabilities requiring specialist support).

## 2. Policies for Identifying and Assessing SEND

At The Downley School, we use a graduated approach to identify and assess pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ensuring we provide high-quality, adaptive teaching. If challenges persist, we collaborate closely with parents and, if necessary, external professionals such as speech therapists or educational psychologists. Key triggers for this process include:

- Concerns raised by parents or teachers
- Below-age-expectation attainment
- Poor academic progress
- Interventions not having a desired impact on progress
- Information from previous schools
- Observations of social, emotional, or behavioural difficulties
- Challenges with communication or language skills
- Difficulty in engaging with the curriculum or classroom activities
- Feedback from other professionals involved with the child
- Changes in behaviour or attitude towards learning

By considering these factors, we aim to ensure that every child receives the appropriate support tailored to their individual needs.

### Graduated Approach:

1. **Initial Identification:** If a pupil's attainment is below age expectations or they are not making expected progress in gaining knowledge and skills through the curriculum, the class teacher will identify barriers to their learning. Additional strategies may be applied through quality first teaching. Targeted interventions may be implemented, and parents/carers will be informed.
2. **Targeted Support:** If a pupil continues to face challenges, the class teacher will consult with the SENDCo, who may conduct further evaluations. Parents/carers will be invited to discuss concerns and next steps. Outcomes will guide support, and the pupil may be placed on the SEND register with a Personalised Learning Plan (PLP). If a PLP is issued and a child is placed on the SEND register, parents will be informed, and their permission will always be sought to proceed.
3. **Referral to Specialists:** If insufficient progress persists, the SENDCo may refer the pupil to an outside agency, such as the Educational Psychology Service, CAMHS, or SALT. Parents/carers will be invited to discuss the referral, and their permission will always be sought to proceed.
4. **Recommendations:** The outside agency will assess the pupil (working within their time framework) and provide recommendations, which will be included in the Personalised Learning Plan. Progress will be regularly reviewed as part of the 'Assess – Plan – Do – Review' cycle.

5. **EHCP Assessment:** If progress remains inadequate despite support, the school may request an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment. Parents/carers will remain involved throughout the process.
6. **Ongoing Support:** While the EHCP assessment is underway, the pupil will continue to receive support, and their views will be included. If deemed appropriate, the local authority will arrange for the assessment.

### 3. Admission Arrangements for SEND Pupils

The Downley School is committed to inclusive education. Our admissions process is in line with the Equality Act 2010, ensuring no discrimination based on disability. The school will make **reasonable adjustments** to both the admissions process and physical environment to provide equal access. Our admissions criteria are transparent, fair, and do not disadvantage disabled pupils, ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to access education.

Children with an EHCP naming The Downley School as the designated school will not be refused admission, provided there is capacity, and the school can make reasonable adjustments to meet the child's needs, ensuring they are not excluded simply due to their SEND.

### 4. Provision Policies for SEND Pupils

#### High-quality provision for pupils with SEND

At The Downley School, we are committed to providing high-quality provision for all pupils, including those with SEND, regardless of whether they have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). We ensure that pupils with SEND receive the support they need to succeed through adaptive teaching strategies and specific interventions tailored to individual needs.

Quality First Teaching guarantees that all children receive a strong educational foundation, while additional support is offered through 1:1 or small group support and targeted interventions delivered by our staff.

PLPs establish short-term targets based on assessments of progress before and after interventions to monitor their effectiveness and adjust support accordingly.

#### Assessing and reviewing SEND provision

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, continuous assessment ensures that all pupils' development is carefully monitored, while in Key Stages 1 and 2, termly data is used to track pupil progress, leading to necessary adaptations to the curriculum or learning environment.

The effectiveness of SEND provision is regularly reviewed through pupil progress meetings, data analysis, and feedback from pupils, parents, and staff. Interventions are assessed every six weeks and adjusted as needed to ensure their effectiveness.

For pupils with EHCPs, annual reviews are held in consultation with parents, teachers, and external professionals, while PLPs are evaluated termly to reflect ongoing progress and needs.

## Inclusive teaching approaches

Our school is committed to inclusive education, ensuring that pupils with SEND are fully supported within the learning environment. Adaptive teaching is central to our approach, with teachers utilising strategies such as scaffolding, visual aids, and personalised support (where applicable) to meet the diverse needs of our learners. Teaching and learning is regularly evaluated to ensure the curriculum is effectively adapted to support our pupils. PLPs are created in collaboration with parents, staff, and the child to ensure appropriate and tailored support.

## Curriculum and Environment Adaptations

To ensure full access to the curriculum for pupils with SEND, our school makes a range of adjustments, such as modifying lesson content, adjusting the pace of teaching, and adapting the physical environment when necessary. We implement reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with SEND can fully participate in all aspects of learning and curriculum enrichment activities, including school trips

For exams such as SATS or Transfer Tests (11+), access arrangements are provided based on specialist reports that identify each child's individual needs. However, the final decision regarding these arrangements is made by an appropriate external body, outside of the school's control.

## Additional Learning Support and Interventions

In addition to high-quality teaching, we offer small group or 1:1 interventions where needed, focusing on areas like literacy, numeracy, social skills, and speech and language development. These interventions are delivered by our support staff and are carefully monitored to assess their effectiveness. Multi-agency PLPs are regularly updated to ensure the needs of children with EHCPs are met through collaboration with external professionals.

## Promoting Equality and Preventing Discrimination

To ensure that disabled pupils are not treated less favourably than others, our school implements reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010. These adjustments include modifying the curriculum, adapting the physical environment, providing specialised equipment, and offering additional support through staff or tailored resources.

By creating an inclusive environment, we enable pupils with SEND to access the school and fully engage in all activities, including physical activities, alongside their peers without SEND. Our approach ensures that all pupils can participate equally in both curricular and extra-curricular activities.

## Emotional, Mental, and Social Development Support

The emotional and social development of pupils with SEND is supported through our PSHE programme – Jigsaw. For pupils needing more targeted support, we offer personalised interventions, such as Lego Play Therapy. Additionally, Zones of Regulation framework helps pupils identify and manage their emotions more effectively. These interventions are guided by advice from external agencies. Our SENDCo and Family Liaison Officer work closely with families to provide emotional support, helping pupils build self-regulation skills, and connect them with additional resources as needed.

## Support for Medical Needs and SEND

If a pupil has additional medical needs alongside their Special Educational Needs (SEN), a care plan will be compiled in consultation with parents/carers and the medical team, if deemed necessary. These plans are updated annually and discussed with all staff involved with the pupil to ensure appropriate support is provided. Pupils with medical needs and additional SEN will be included on the SEND register. The Downley School's Administration of Medicines Policy can be found on the school website.

## **5. SEND Governance and Monitoring**

Mrs. Grisedale is responsible for overseeing the provision for children with SEND, and she can be contacted at [senco@dnl.odbst.org](mailto:senco@dnl.odbst.org)

Our SEND Governor meets regularly with the SENDCo to discuss SEND provision and monitor the progress of pupils with SEND. Through ongoing collaboration and regular monitoring, we ensure that all pupils receive the support they need to thrive at The Downley School.

## **6. Staff expertise and training**

Our staff members receive ongoing training to support children with SEND, which may include workshops, external courses and access to specialist training programs. All teaching staff and support staff participate in regular and continuous training provided by the SENDCo.

Additionally, we collaborate with outside agencies to access specialist training (where applicable) and advice for teachers and support staff, ensuring that we can address specific individual needs effectively. This comprehensive approach equips our staff to support diverse learning needs and enhances the overall educational experience for all pupils.

## **7. Equipment and Facilities for SEND**

The school buildings are multi-level, but a lift and several ramps have been installed to ensure that the entrance hall, dining room, classrooms on both floors, and the two main playgrounds are wheelchair accessible. There are two disabled toilet facilities in different locations, along with designated disabled parking spaces.

The school is committed to supporting children and young people with SEND by assessing individual needs and allocating resources accordingly, such as specialised learning materials, assistive technology, and modifications to physical spaces to enhance accessibility. Whenever a need arises, the school will investigate the possibility of reasonable adjustments to facilitate inclusion and implement them when viable.

## **8. Accessibility Plan**

Our Accessibility Plan is designed to ensure that pupils with disabilities can fully engage with our curriculum, benefiting from the same educational opportunities as their peers. We are committed to increasing participation through tailored support and adaptive teaching methods. Additionally, we are focused on enhancing the physical environment of our school to ensure that all facilities are accessible, enabling every pupil to utilise the resources we provide. Finally, we are dedicated to improving the availability of accessible information, ensuring that all communications are clear and comprehensible for pupils and parents / carers with disabilities, fostering an inclusive learning environment for everyone. Our Accessibility Plan is reviewed every three years.

## **9. Parental Consultation and Involvement**

The school actively engages parents of children with SEND in their education through regular meetings, surveys, and communication via email or phone. Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's PLP, ensuring their insights are valued.

If parents have concerns about their child's progress, they should first contact the class teacher, who will coordinate with phase leaders and the SENDCo as needed. For direct communication with the SENDCo, parents can arrange this through the school office or by emailing [senco@dnl.odbst.org](mailto:senco@dnl.odbst.org)

All parents participate in parent-teacher consultations to discuss their child's progress. Each pupil with SEND will have their PLP regularly reviewed in discussions with the child and their parents. Families are encouraged to share their views on the support provided throughout the year, which will be considered in decision-making.

For children with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), the Annual Review is crucial, involving relevant professionals, parents, and the child, who is invited to share their views before and possibly attend part of the meeting. This fosters a collaborative approach to support.

## **10. Children's Consultation and Involvement**

We ensure the involvement of children with SEND in their education by encouraging them to share their thoughts and feedback through regular discussions, pupil surveys, and opportunities to express their views. Their input is vital in shaping their learning experiences and supporting their personal goals.

Children are actively involved in the development of their PLP, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decision-making. This collaborative approach empowers them to take ownership of their education and fosters a positive learning environment.

## **11. Complaints Procedure for SEND**

The governing body has established a clear procedure for parents to voice complaints regarding the provision for pupils with SEND. Parents can raise concerns directly with the SENDCo or submit a formal complaint through the school's complaints policy, ensuring their concerns are addressed promptly and effectively.

## 12. Collaboration with Other Bodies

The Downley School collaborates with various organisations, including health and social services, local authority support services to meet the needs of pupils with SEND and support their families with additional resources and expertise.

Key collaborators include:

- Specialist Teaching Services for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Down's Syndrome, Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, etc.
- Educational Psychology
- Cognition and Learning Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Community Paediatrics
- School Nursing Team
- Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
- Bucks Family Support Service
- Social Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- County Attendance Team
- Nursery and Secondary School Liaison
- Bucks SEND Team
- ODBST SEND Team

Parents of pupils with SEND can access support services through The Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service or SENDIAS at Buckinghamshire County Council.  
Telephone: [01296 383 754](tel:01296383754)

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/bucks-sendias-service/contact-sendias/>

Visits by appointment only.

Buckinghamshire Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) Service

Annex A

Walton Street

Aylesbury

Bucks

HP20 1UX

## 13. Transition

Our school has established comprehensive arrangements to support pupils with SEND during transitions between phases of education, ensuring smooth transfers both in and out of The Downley School. Strong connections with our feeder nursery schools enable class teachers and support staff to visit, especially during the summer term, to meet and assess children who will join us in the new academic year. Nursery staff are also invited to visit our Early Years, and the SENDCo organises visits for children with SEND as needed.

Similarly, we welcome teachers and SENDCos from secondary schools to meet with Year 6 pupils and their teachers to discuss individual achievements and needs. Children's SEND records, along with other relevant documents, are transferred at the end of the term prior to the new academic year. For those with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), transition arrangements are agreed upon during the pupil's Year 5 Annual Review.

To further support transitions, additional transition days may be arranged based on individual circumstances and emotional support is provided through our Family Liaison Officer, ensuring a smooth transition for every child.

#### **14. Local Authority's Local Offer**

Information regarding the local authority's Local Offer can be found on their website at <https://familyinfo.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/send/>

This resource provides details about the services available for children and young people with SEND and their families, including information and advice on Special Educational Needs and Disability provision both within and outside the Local Authority. Additional information is available on the Bucks Family Information site at [www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/localoffer](http://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/localoffer). For inquiries about the Local Offer, you can contact Buckinghamshire County Council by calling **0845 688 4944** or emailing [familyinfo@buckscc.gov.uk](mailto:familyinfo@buckscc.gov.uk).