

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

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Policy at a glance

Our commitment: Every young person is entitled to dignity, ambitious expectations, meaningful participation and support that removes barriers.

Core approach: Early identification; high-quality inclusive practice; reasonable adjustments; and a graduated Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle.

Shared responsibility: SEND is everyone's responsibility. The practitioner working with the young person remains responsible for inclusive practice, supported by leaders and the Designated SEND Lead.

Partnership: Young people and parents/carers are listened to and involved. Endeavour works transparently with commissioners and relevant education, health and social care professionals.

Accountability: Provision, adjustments, outcomes, safeguarding information and review decisions are recorded proportionately and shared lawfully.

1. Policy statement

Endeavour's purpose is enriching lives through education and adventure. We recognise that social, economic, physical and psychological circumstances can limit aspiration, experiences and opportunities. Our SEND practice therefore combines high expectations with practical support so that children and young people can participate, learn, develop confidence and make progress.

We will use our best endeavours, within our role and the provision commissioned from us, to identify and remove barriers to participation and learning. We will not assume that a diagnosis is required before support can begin. We will respond to the needs presented, make reasonable adjustments where required, and seek specialist advice where needs exceed our expertise or remit.

Endeavour will not lower expectations because a young person has SEND. Equity may require different approaches, resources, communication methods, environments, pacing or levels of support so that a young person can access an ambitious and safe programme.

2. Scope and legal context

2.1 Scope. This policy applies across Endeavour's education, alternative provision, youth provision, outdoor activities, personal development programmes, trips/residentials and other services involving children and young people. It applies to employees, volunteers, agency/sessional staff, contractors acting in delivery roles, and leaders who commission, design or quality-assure provision.

2.2 Provider status and commissioning. Endeavour may work with young people whose statutory educational responsibility remains with a school, academy trust or local authority. A placement with Endeavour does not transfer those statutory responsibilities unless the law or a formal arrangement expressly provides otherwise. Endeavour will cooperate with commissioners, provide agreed evidence, implement relevant elements of an EHC plan that form

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part of the commissioned placement, and promptly escalate concerns about unmet need, attendance, safety or suitability.

2.3 Legal and guidance framework. This policy has regard, as applicable to Endeavour's role, to the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3 (children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities).
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (as amended).
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE/DHSC; statutory guidance, current GOV.UK version updated September 2024).
- Equality Act 2010, including disability discrimination and the duty to make reasonable adjustments where applicable.
- Education Act 1996, including section 19 duties on local authorities in relation to suitable education for children who would otherwise not receive it.
- DfE Alternative provision: statutory guidance (current GOV.UK version updated February 2025), which expressly applies to independent providers delivering alternative provision.
- DfE Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (statutory guidance), where relevant to a commissioned placement and in conjunction with the responsible school/commissioner.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, where applicable to Endeavour's education and safeguarding arrangements, alongside Endeavour's Safeguarding Policy.
- DfE non-school alternative provision voluntary national standards (2025), where applicable, as a quality benchmark for non-school/unregistered alternative provision.

Important distinction: The SEND Code imposes particular duties on named statutory bodies and education institutions. Endeavour will follow the Code's principles and relevant requirements in its provider role, but this policy should not be read as transferring a commissioner's legal duties to Endeavour.

3. Definitions and principles

3.1 Special educational needs

A child or young person has SEN where they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision. For school-age children, this includes a significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or a disability that prevents or hinders use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream education. Identification is for the purpose of deciding what action is needed, not attaching a limiting label.

3.2 Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, disability is broadly defined as a physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. SEND and disability overlap but are not identical: a young person may be disabled without having SEN, or may have SEN without meeting the Equality Act definition of disability.

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3.3 Four broad areas of need

Area	What this may include
Communication and interaction	including speech, language and communication needs and autism-related communication differences.
Cognition and learning	including specific and moderate/severe learning difficulties.
Social, emotional and mental health	where needs create barriers to learning, relationships, regulation, participation or wellbeing.
Sensory and/or physical	including hearing, vision, physical and sensory processing needs where these create access barriers.

3.4 Factors that are not, by themselves, SEND

Low attainment, poor attendance, behaviour that challenges, English as an additional language, being looked after or previously looked after, disadvantage, trauma, family circumstances or a medical condition do not automatically mean that a young person has SEND. They may coexist with SEND and must be explored carefully. Endeavour will avoid attributing difficulties to SEND without sufficient assessment and will avoid overlooking SEND because another explanation appears more obvious.

4. Organisation-wide principles

Person-centred practice. Young people's views, strengths, aspirations, communication preferences and lived experience inform decisions. Parents/carers are partners where appropriate and lawful.

Early identification and response. Staff notice emerging barriers and act early. Support should not be delayed solely while a diagnosis, assessment or external service is awaited.

Inclusive first response. High-quality, adaptive practice is the starting point. Staff adjust explanations, task design, communication, environment, equipment, routines and support before assuming that a young person cannot participate.

Reasonable adjustments. Where a disabled young person would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage, Endeavour will consider and implement reasonable adjustments within its legal role. Adjustments are individual, anticipatory where the relevant duty applies, recorded, reviewed and communicated to those who need to know.

Safeguarding and SEND. SEND can increase vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, bullying, peer-on-peer harm, online harm and communication barriers. Behaviour changes or distress will not be automatically attributed to SEND. Safeguarding procedures always take precedence where there is a concern.

Ambition and preparation for adulthood. Provision should build knowledge, independence, communication, self-advocacy, relationships, health literacy, community participation and pathways to further education, training or employment.

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Proportionate information sharing. Relevant information follows the young person between Endeavour staff and, where lawful and necessary, between Endeavour and commissioners/professionals. Data is handled in line with Endeavour's Data Protection Policy.

5. Identification, referral and placement planning

5.1 Before or at the start of a placement

- Obtain sufficient information from the commissioner and family, proportionate to the placement, including known SEND, EHC plan or SEN support information, risk assessments, safeguarding information, medical needs, communication needs, previous successful strategies, reasonable adjustments and intended outcomes.
- Clarify the purpose, frequency, duration and intended outcomes of the placement, who remains responsible for education and statutory reviews, named contacts, attendance reporting, transport, emergency arrangements and review points.
- Check whether Endeavour can safely and reasonably meet the identified needs within the commissioned model. Where information is incomplete or provision appears unsuitable, escalate before placement starts or as soon as the issue becomes known.
- Plan reasonable adjustments and staff briefing on a need-to-know basis. Avoid unnecessary disclosure of diagnostic or sensitive information.

5.2 Emerging or previously unidentified needs

If a young person is not making expected progress, cannot access the programme, is repeatedly dysregulated, shows communication or sensory barriers, or requires support that appears different from or additional to peers, staff will record observations and discuss them with the Programme Lead and Designated SEND Lead. Endeavour will distinguish between a possible SEND need and other factors, while addressing immediate barriers regardless of cause.

6. Graduated response: Assess – Plan – Do – Review

Endeavour adopts the graduated approach in the SEND Code as its organisation-wide practice model. The intensity and formality of the cycle will be proportionate to the length and purpose of the placement.

ASSESS	Build a rounded picture using young person voice, parent/carers and commissioner information, staff observations, progress and engagement data, attendance, behaviour/safeguarding context, relevant professional advice and the requirements of any EHC plan.
PLAN	Agree outcomes, adjustments, teaching/support strategies, intervention or specialist input, responsibilities, measures of success and a review date. Ensure the young person understands the plan in an accessible way.
DO	Deliver the agreed provision consistently. The practitioner remains responsible for inclusive practice even when support is provided by another adult or specialist. Record significant adaptations, progress and concerns.

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REVIEW

Evaluate impact with the young person and relevant partners. Decide what should continue, change, stop or be escalated. Share evidence with the commissioner and feed learning into the next cycle.

6.1 Escalation

- The young person's needs cannot be met safely or effectively within the current commissioned placement, even with reasonable adjustments.
- Progress remains limited despite relevant, purposeful and reviewed support.
- Additional specialist assessment or provision may be required.
- There is evidence that the EHC plan or SEN support arrangements may need review.
- There is a material change in need, risk, attendance or circumstances.

In these circumstances, the Designated SEND Lead or Programme Lead will promptly contact the commissioner and, where appropriate, the parent/carer and relevant professionals. Endeavour may recommend that the responsible school or local authority considers further assessment or review. Endeavour will support requests for evidence but will not present itself as the decision-maker where that power belongs to another body.

7. Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

- Where a young person has an EHC plan, Endeavour will obtain and understand the sections relevant to the placement, particularly needs, outcomes, special educational provision, health/social care information relevant to safe delivery, and placement arrangements.
- Endeavour will deliver the elements of provision it has expressly agreed or been commissioned to provide and will provide accurate evidence of delivery and impact.
- The local authority retains responsibility for securing the special educational provision specified in an EHC plan, subject to the statutory framework. Endeavour will notify the commissioner/local authority promptly if agreed provision cannot be delivered or appears insufficient.
- Where requested by the responsible body, Endeavour will contribute to annual reviews and other statutory review processes with clear evidence of progress, barriers, attendance/engagement, provision delivered and the young person's views.

8. Reasonable adjustments, accessibility and inclusive delivery

Adjustments will be based on individual need and the activity. They may include, for example:

- accessible or simplified information; visual schedules; alternative communication methods;
- changes to group size, pacing, task sequence, transitions or break arrangements;
- sensory adaptations, quieter spaces or predictable routines;
- adapted equipment, seating, clothing/PPE or physical access arrangements where safe and practicable;
- additional preparation for unfamiliar environments, outdoor activities, travel or residential experiences;
- support with literacy, recording, executive functioning, organisation or emotional regulation;

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- adjustments to assessment or accredited activity in accordance with awarding-body rules;
- additional adult support where assessed as necessary and appropriately commissioned/resourced.

Safety requirements and competence standards are not automatically removed by the reasonable-adjustment duty. Where an activity cannot be made safe or accessible through a reasonable adjustment, staff must explore a genuinely meaningful alternative rather than simply excluding the young person.

9. Behaviour, attendance and participation

Behaviour may communicate unmet need, distress, communication difficulty, trauma, sensory overload or a mismatch between demand and support. Staff will use Endeavour's Behaviour and Positive Handling Guidance alongside this policy. SEND does not remove boundaries or safeguarding expectations, but staff must consider whether reasonable adjustments or changes to support are required before or alongside consequences.

Endeavour will report attendance and participation to commissioners in accordance with placement agreements and statutory expectations applicable to alternative provision. Persistent absence, repeated refusal, reduced timetables or placement breakdown will trigger review rather than being treated solely as a compliance issue. Any decision to end or materially reduce a placement must involve the commissioner and consider SEND, safeguarding, equality and continuity-of-education implications.

10. Transitions and preparation for adulthood

- Plan entry to Endeavour and exit/return to school carefully, with information transfer and familiarisation proportionate to need.
- For young people approaching post-16 or adulthood, contribute to outcomes around further education/training, employment, independent living, health, relationships, community participation and self-advocacy where relevant to the programme.
- Provide the receiving setting or commissioner with a concise record of successful strategies, adjustments, progress and outstanding concerns, subject to lawful information-sharing requirements.

11. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Core responsibility
Board of Trustees / governance	Approve this policy; seek assurance that Endeavour meets applicable legal and contractual duties; ensure SEND is considered in strategy, resources, equality and risk; and receive proportionate information on quality and impact.
Chief Executive / senior leadership	Ensure organisation-wide implementation, designate SEND leadership capacity, align SEND with safeguarding and quality assurance, provide appropriate resources, and address systemic barriers.
Designated SEND Lead	Maintain the organisational framework; advise staff; support placement decisions and graduated-response practice; coordinate with

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Role	Core responsibility
	commissioners/professionals; oversee training and quality assurance; monitor themes and impact; and support review of complex cases. This role does not replace a statutory school SENCO where the law requires one in the responsible school.
Programme Leads / managers	Ensure staff know relevant needs and adjustments; embed APDR and recording; monitor participation/progress; escalate concerns; ensure risk assessments reflect SEND; and maintain communication with commissioners.
All practitioners	Know the needs relevant to safe and effective delivery; provide inclusive, adaptive practice; implement agreed adjustments; maintain ambitious expectations; listen to young people; record and communicate concerns; and follow safeguarding procedures.
Commissioning school/local authority	Retains its own statutory responsibilities, including those relating to the pupil's education, SEN support/EHC plan processes, attendance and oversight, except where lawfully delegated or otherwise specified. Endeavour will cooperate and provide evidence but will not assume untransferred duties.
Young people and parents/carers	Are partners in identifying strengths, barriers, aspirations and what helps. Their views will be sought and considered in ways appropriate to age, capacity, communication and the nature of the placement.

12. Records, information sharing and confidentiality

- Record SEND information accurately, respectfully and on a need-to-know basis. Avoid language that is stigmatising, speculative or presents behaviour as a diagnosis.
- Maintain records of agreed outcomes, adjustments, provision delivered, reviews, significant communication and escalation decisions proportionate to the placement.
- Share information where there is a lawful basis and it is necessary for education, safety, safeguarding, statutory processes or the delivery/review of commissioned provision.
- Follow Endeavour's Data Protection Policy, privacy information, retention arrangements and safeguarding information-sharing procedures.

13. Concerns, complaints and disagreement

Concerns about Endeavour's own provision should be raised promptly with the relevant Programme Lead and may be progressed through Endeavour's Complaints Policy. Complaints about statutory SEN decisions, EHC needs assessments, EHC plans or local-authority provision may fall within separate statutory disagreement-resolution, mediation or SEND Tribunal routes. Endeavour will direct families to the responsible body where appropriate and cooperate with lawful requests for evidence.

14. Training, supervision and resources

- SEND and inclusive practice form part of induction for staff whose roles involve children and young people.

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- Training priorities will reflect the profile of young people using Endeavour, incidents/near misses, quality assurance, commissioner feedback, safeguarding learning and changes in guidance.
- Specialist training will be arranged where a placement requires competencies beyond normal role expectations, for example communication systems, moving/handling, medical support or specific risk controls.
- Leaders will consider workload and resource implications when agreeing provision; support must be realistic, deliverable and reviewed for impact.

15. Quality assurance and monitoring

Endeavour will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through a proportionate set of indicators, reviewed at programme and organisation level. These may include:

- young person and parent/carer voice;
- commissioner feedback and placement reviews;
- progress against individual placement outcomes;
- attendance, engagement and successful transitions;
- use and effectiveness of reasonable adjustments;
- safeguarding, behaviour and incident themes involving SEND;
- placement refusals, breakdowns or early endings and the reasons for them;
- staff training, confidence and supervision themes;
- complaints and lessons learned.

Data will be interpreted carefully: SEND outcomes cannot be reduced to attainment alone, particularly in short-term or personal-development provision. Quality assurance will consider whether young people are safer, more engaged, more independent, better able to communicate and regulate, and making progress toward agreed outcomes.

16. Policy review and related documents

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, Endeavour's operating model or commissioning requirements change materially. The Designated SEND Lead and safeguarding lead should jointly review any amendments that affect vulnerability, information sharing, behaviour, physical intervention, medical support or off-site activity.

Related Endeavour documents include Safeguarding, Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Positive Handling Guidance, Data Protection, Health and Safety, Complaints, Online Safety, Child Criminal Exploitation, Child Missing/Absconding and Safer Recruitment policies/procedures.

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Appendix A – Minimum SEND placement checklist

- ☐ Purpose and intended outcomes of placement agreed.
- ☐ Commissioner and responsible school/local authority contact confirmed.
- ☐ Young person and parent/carer views obtained where appropriate.
- ☐ Current SEN support information and/or relevant EHC plan sections received.
- ☐ Safeguarding, medical, communication, sensory, mobility and behaviour/risk information received.
- ☐ Reasonable adjustments identified and communicated to delivery staff.
- ☐ Staff competencies/training checked for any specialist support required.
- ☐ Attendance and incident reporting routes agreed.
- ☐ Review date and evidence requirements agreed.
- ☐ Exit/transition arrangements considered from the outset.

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Appendix B – APDR review prompts

Assess

- What are the young person's strengths and aspirations?
- What barriers are being observed, in which contexts, and how often?
- What does the young person say helps? What do family/commissioner/professionals say?
- What has already been tried and with what impact?

Plan

- What specific outcome are we trying to achieve?
- What will staff do differently? What adjustment/support will be provided?
- Who is responsible and by when?
- How will we know whether it worked?

Do

- Was the plan delivered consistently?
- Were there barriers to delivery or unintended effects?
- What evidence of engagement, progress, regulation, participation or independence is available?

Review

- What changed? What did not?
- What should continue, stop or change?
- Does the commissioner need to review the placement, SEN support or EHC plan arrangements?
- What does the young person want to happen next?

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Appendix C – Statutory guidance and reference sources

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance; updated 12 September 2024)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

SEND: guide for schools and alternative provision settings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-guide-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings>

Alternative provision (statutory guidance; updated 5 February 2025)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (statutory guidance)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3>

Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards (2025)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-school-alternative-provision-voluntary-national-standards>

What maintained schools must or should publish online – SEND information requirements

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-maintained-schools-must-publish-online>

Endeavour – Vision and Values

<https://endeavour.org.uk/vision-and-values/>

Endeavour – Policies and Procedures

<https://endeavour.org.uk/policies-and-procedures/>