



# Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report

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**Chair of Governors:**

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**Headteacher:**

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Dear families,

This report explains how we put our SEND Policy into practice at The Orchard School. We are a maintained special school for pupils aged 7–16 with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Our Mission is: “Everyone Matters, Everyone Cares.” Our values are Trust, Belonging, Aspiration, Voice, Pride and Curiosity. Our approach is relational and therapeutic, underpinned by Therapeutic Thinking and The Orchard Way (Ready, Respectful, Safe). If you would like to read our SEND Policy and Accessibility Plan, please visit our website [www.orchard-school.com](http://www.orchard-school.com) or contact the school office for a copy. A short Glossary is included at the end.

## **Accessibility Plan**

The Orchard School's Accessibility Plan sets out how we improve access to education for pupils with disabilities, including access to the curriculum, the physical environment, and information.

The Accessibility Plan can be found here: [Accessibility Plan](#)

A paper copy is available from the school office on request.

## **1. What types of SEN does The Orchard School provide for?**

- We admit pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where SEMH is identified as a primary need. Many pupils have needs across additional areas.
- Typical profiles we support include:
  - Communication and interaction: social communication differences; speech, language and communication needs.
  - Cognition and learning: specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia), moderate learning difficulties.
  - Social, emotional and mental health: anxiety, emotional regulation needs, attachment-informed profiles, ADHD/ADD.
  - Sensory and/or physical: sensory processing differences; visual/hearing impairment; physical needs (reasonable adjustments made).

## **2. Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had?**

- As a special school, all teachers and support staff are teachers of SEND. Support is whole-school and team-based.
- Leadership and oversight
  - Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and our SENDCo, Rebecca Thomas-Read oversee statutory SEND compliance, provision quality and outcomes.
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is the Deputy Headteacher. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Class teams

- Each class has a teacher and a team of teaching assistants/learning mentors who deliver daily regulation, learning and therapeutic support.
- Training (updated annually and for new staff) typically includes:
  - Therapeutic Thinking (relational and restorative practice)
  - De-escalation and positive handling (policy-aligned)
  - Emotion coaching and regulation strategies
  - SEMH-informed curriculum and assessment
  - Communication-friendly classrooms and social communication support
  - Literacy and numeracy interventions for diverse learners
  - Safeguarding, online safety and safer working practice
  - Health, medical and first aid training relevant to pupil needs
- External professionals (commissioned according to need) may include: Educational Psychology; Speech and Language Therapy; Occupational Therapy; CAMHS/MHST; school nursing; social care; counselling; careers guidance.

### **3. What should I do if I think my child has SEN?**

- Most pupils at The Orchard School already have an EHCP naming the school.
- If you have concerns about changing needs or provision, contact your child's class teacher or phase lead via the school office.
- We will arrange a discussion and, if needed, an earlier review of provision/EHCP.

### **4. How will the school know if my child needs SEN support?**

- All pupils have SEN by virtue of their EHCP. Identification is not the focus; matching provision to need is.
- We continually review needs through daily observation and logs, half-termly progress reviews, multi-agency advice, and annual/interim EHCP reviews.

### **5. How will the school measure my child's progress?**

- We use a graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review) within the EHCP framework.
- We track: academic progress; SEMH and regulation; personal development (including careers-related learning from Year 9).
- We use baseline assessments and review impact after agreed cycles, adjusting provision swiftly where needed.

## **The Graduated Approach**

At The Orchard School, we use the graduated approach to ensure that provision is carefully matched to pupil need. This is a continuous 4-part cycle:

1. Assess
  - 1.1. Gather a clear picture of the pupil's strengths, needs and barriers to learning.
  - 1.2. Use classroom observation, assessment data, pupil and family views, and advice from professionals.
2. Plan
  - 2.1. Agree personalised outcomes and strategies with staff, family and, wherever possible, the pupil.
  - 2.2. Identify resources, adaptations and interventions required.
3. Do
  - 3.1. Deliver the agreed strategies and interventions as part of daily teaching and support.
  - 3.2. Ensure all staff working with the pupil are aware of their plan.
4. Review
  - 4.1. Regularly evaluate progress towards outcomes.
  - 4.2. Adapt strategies and provision in response to evidence of impact.

This process is ongoing and cyclical, ensuring that support evolves as the pupil's needs change over time.

The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.



## **6. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?**

- Partnership with families is central: regular updates and at least termly meetings.
- You help set and review personalised outcomes; contribute to annual and interim reviews.
- Contact the class teacher/phase lead via the school office at any time if you have concerns or updates.

## **7. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?**

- Pupil voice: we invite pupils to share views directly or through supported methods (conversation, drawing, video, scribe).
- We agree simple, clear goals with them and celebrate progress.

## **8. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child?**

- Curriculum: primary-style model in KS2 and KS3; secondary model with accreditation in KS4.
- High-quality, adaptive teaching; explicit routines (Ready, Respectful, Safe).
- Typical adaptations include chunked instructions; pre-/re-teaching; scaffolds; visuals; reduced sensory load; regulation breaks; personalised timetables; assistive technology.
- Interventions/supports include communication & interaction (visual schedules, social narratives), cognition & learning (targeted literacy/numeracy), SEMH (mentoring, regulation plans, restorative approaches), sensory/physical (sensory diet, positioning), outdoor/experiential learning.

## **9. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?**

- Termly reviews of outcomes and intervention impact; pupil and family feedback; work scrutiny and provision mapping; attendance/safeguarding/behaviour data; annual EHCP review.

## **10. How will school resources be secured for my child?**

- Funding comprises place funding and top-up (Element 3) from the Local Authority, determined by the EHCP.
- Specific equipment, staffing or therapies are evidenced, commissioned/approved as appropriate, and reviewed for impact.

### **11. How will my child be included in activities alongside pupils who don't have SEN?**

- Full participation in school life: clubs, trips, special events are accessible with reasonable adjustments and risk assessment.
- Activities are planned with SEMH needs in mind (staffing, sensory load, regulation opportunities).

### **12. How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for pupils with SEN or a disability?**

- Admissions are through the Local Authority naming The Orchard School on a pupil's EHCP following consultation with the school.
- We meet duties under the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010.

### **13. How does the school support pupils with disabilities?**

- We are committed to ensuring that pupils with disabilities experience equity of access and opportunity, supported through reasonable adjustments and planned provision
- We follow personal healthcare plans and manual handling plans where relevant.
- Our Accessibility Plan sets out how we increase curriculum access, improve the physical environment, and the availability of accessible information.

### **14. How will the school support my child's mental health and emotional and social development?**

- Therapeutic culture: Therapeutic Thinking and The Orchard Way; key-adult relationships; check-in/check-out; personalised regulation plans; safe spaces for co-regulation; restorative approaches.
- Anti-bullying: zero tolerance of bullying including prejudice-based incidents; record, respond, restore and educate.

### **15. What support is available for transitions and for preparing for adulthood?**

- Internal transitions: enhanced handover, pupil profiles, visits, visuals and social stories.
- New starters: staged induction, family meetings, multi-agency coordination, initial regulation plans.
- Preparing for adulthood (from Year 9): EHCP outcomes include employment, independent living, community inclusion and health; careers programme; provider visits; supported applications.

## 16. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEN?

- The Designated Teacher for Looked-After Children is Scott McFarnell, Assistant Headteacher.
- Personal Education Plans (PEPs) align with EHCP outcomes and review cycles; stability and key-adult relationships are prioritised.

## 17. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?

- Raise concerns with the class teacher or phase lead. If unresolved, escalate to the linked member of SLT.
- See the school's Complaints Policy for formal stages. Families may consider LA disagreement resolution/mediation prior to any tribunal action (SEND Tribunal information: GOV.UK).

## 18. What support is available for me and my family?

- Contact the school office to speak with your child's class teacher or phase lead.
- Local Authority SEND Local Offer: [Kent Local Offer](#)
- SENDIAS (impartial advice): [local SENDIAS organisation](#)
- National charities:
  - [IPSEA](#)
  - [SEND family support](#)
  - [NSPCC](#)
  - [Family Action](#)

## 19. Glossary

- Annual review: yearly meeting to review the EHCP.
- EHCP: Education, Health and Care Plan – legal document describing needs and provision.
- Graduated approach: assess, plan, do, review cycle to tailor support.
- Reasonable adjustments: changes to reduce disadvantage caused by disability.
- SEMH: Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.
- SEND: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

## Related policies and documents (available on request/website)

- SEND Policy
- Relationships and Therapeutic (Behaviour) Policy – “The Orchard Way”
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Curriculum Policy
- Online Safety/Acceptable Use

- Attendance Policy
- Medical Conditions/First Aid

### **Contact**

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