SEND Policy

Policy updated: November 2026

Policy to be reviewed: November 2027

Compass School is a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and Alternative Learning Provision supporting pupils from Key Stages 1–4 who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of permanent exclusion. As a provision, we support pupils with a range of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), particularly those with social emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

We recognise that our pupils may have experienced disrupted education, unmet needs, difficulties with engagement and barriers to accessing learning. We are committed to identifying and understanding each pupil's individual needs, strengths and aspirations, ensuring that appropriate support is provided to enable them to access education, develop independence and achieve positive outcomes.

Compass School adopts an inclusive, relational, nurturing and trauma-informed approach. We acknowledge that behaviour may communicate an underlying need and that pupils may require different levels of support to engage successfully in education.

Our SEND provision is informed by the Children and Families Act 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the Equality Act 2010, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015, as amended where applicable), and other relevant statutory guidance.

Identification of Need

"The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil in a category" (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

It is vital that we maximise the opportunities pupils have for success by identifying and responding to their individual needs. We recognise that SEND may be identified before admission or emerge during a pupil's placement at Compass School.

To identify an area of need, we consider a range of information, including:

- The voice of the pupil
- The views and experiences of parents/carers
- Information collected during induction
- Information gathered from teachers and support staff
- Information from previous schools and provisions
- Information from other agencies and professionals
- Work sampling, assessment and pupil observation
- Progress reviews, including Boxall assessments where appropriate, and intervention data
- Existing SEND records, professional reports and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)
- Advice from specialists, including Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, specialist assessors and relevant mental health services

We recognise that pupils may experience overlapping needs and that the effects of disrupted education, adverse experiences, disability and SEMH needs can be complex. Staff will consider the whole pupil and avoid making assumptions about the reasons for a pupil's presentation or difficulties.

A formal diagnosis is not required before a pupil can receive appropriate support for identified special educational needs. Where further assessment or specialist advice is required, the school will work with the pupil, their family and relevant professionals to determine appropriate next steps.

Types of SEND

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of special educational need. These provide a framework for understanding pupils' needs and identifying appropriate support. They are not diagnostic categories, and pupils may experience needs across more than one area.

Communication and Interaction - This includes pupils who experience difficulties with speech, language, communication, social communication or interaction. Needs may include individuals with Autism Spectrum Condition.

Cognition and Learning - This includes pupils who experience difficulties acquiring, processing, retaining or applying learning. Needs may include moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties, as well as specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and dyscalculia.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) - This includes pupils who experience difficulties with emotional regulation, relationships, mental health, attention, behaviour or engagement with learning. Pupils may present as withdrawn, anxious, isolated, disruptive, impulsive or hyperactive. Attention-related needs, including ADHD, may also be relevant.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs - This includes pupils with hearing or visual impairments, sensory processing differences, physical disabilities and medical conditions that affect access to education or everyday school activities. Sensory needs may relate to environmental factors, including noise, lighting, touch and other sensory experiences.

Compass School recognises that identifying a broad area of need is only the starting point. Support is determined by the pupil's individual profile, strengths, barriers to learning and the provision required.

Compass School uses a graduated approach to organising SEND provision, structured through three local levels of support: Wave 1, Wave 2 and Wave 3. These waves are a framework for organising support and do not replace individual assessment or statutory duties.

A Graduated Approach to SEND

Wave 1 – Universal Provision: High-quality, inclusive teaching that takes account of the learning needs of all pupils, including adapted teaching approaches, accessible resources and an inclusive learning environment.

Wave 2 – Targeted Provision: Additional, targeted support and interventions for pupils who require further assistance to access learning, develop skills or make progress. Support may be delivered individually or in small groups, depending on identified needs.

Wave 3 – Specialist Provision: Highly personalised support for pupils with more complex or significant needs. This may include specialist interventions, professional advice, bespoke learning arrangements or coordinated multi-agency support.

Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR)

The Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle is used to identify needs, plan appropriate provision, implement support and evaluate its impact. It is applied where pupils require SEN Support and is informed by the pupil's individual circumstances.

- **Assess:** Consider the pupil's strengths, needs, progress, views and experiences, alongside information from parents/carers, staff, previous settings and relevant professionals
- **Plan:** Agree the support, adaptations and interventions required, including intended outcomes, responsibilities and arrangements for reviewing impact
- **Do:** Implement the agreed provision, with teachers and support staff remaining responsible for the learning and progress of pupils they teach
- **Review:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the provision against the intended outcomes, involving the pupil and their parents/carers and adjusting support where necessary

The frequency and nature of reviews will reflect the pupil's needs and the level of support required. Where a pupil is not making expected progress, the school will consider whether further assessment, changes to provision, specialist advice or a request for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment may be appropriate.

APDR does not replace the statutory requirements associated with an EHCP. Pupils with an EHCP will receive provision informed by their plan, with progress and provision monitored throughout the year and statutory reviews undertaken as required.

Support with exams

For pupils who have identified barriers to learning or an adapted ‘normal way of working’ the SENCo will apply for the most appropriate exam access arrangements or dispensation from the associated examination board for the subjects studied.

Family and Child Voice

Compass School actively involves pupils and parents/carers in their education. We recognise that meaningful participation helps us understand pupils' needs, identify appropriate support and improve outcomes.

This involvement is developed through joint working across different roles within the school:

- All pupils and families are assigned a Family Engagement Worker who links with families to provide and signpost additional support, attend meetings, support new school visits and liaise with other agencies where appropriate
- All pupils have access to Emotionally Available Adults, including teachers and support staff
- Pupils have opportunities to participate in Pupil Voice, make suggestions about provision and contribute feedback on school practices and policies.
- Staff liaise closely with the SENCo and Assistant SENCo to identify pupils who may require additional support
- Pupils and parents/carers are encouraged to contribute to assessment, planning and review, including the development and review of individual support arrangements

Where a pupil finds it difficult to express their views, staff will use appropriate and accessible methods to support participation, taking account of communication needs, anxiety, sensory needs and individual preferences.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility

Compass School is committed to removing barriers to learning and participation for disabled pupils and meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Reasonable adjustments are considered in response to individual needs and may involve adaptations to teaching, curriculum, communication, assessment arrangements, the learning environment, school routines or participation in wider school activities.

Examples may include:

- Enlarged text and accessible learning resources
- Visual supports and alternative communication approaches
- Coloured paper or other appropriate adaptations to materials
- Ear defenders and adjustments to sensory demands
- Access to safe spaces and sensory rooms
- Assistive technology, including Reader Pens and iPads
- Supported reading and additional processing time where appropriate
- Planned movement breaks and supported lesson transitions
- Additional prompting, structure and support to remain engaged

These examples are not exhaustive. Adjustments are determined by the pupil's individual circumstances and reviewed to ensure they remain effective.

The curriculum is designed to engage pupils, develop English, mathematics and life skills, address gaps in previous learning and provide opportunities for pupils to develop their strengths and interests.

The school will consider accessibility across teaching, curriculum, assessment, the physical environment and wider school life. Relevant arrangements are supported by the school's Accessibility Plan and Equality Policy.

Staff Training and Expertise

Staff receive half-termly training to share and develop good practice in engaging and teaching pupils with SEND.

Compass School maintains links with partner agencies to strengthen staff knowledge and understanding. These may include the Neurodiversity Team, Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, relevant mental health services and Family Engagement services.

The SENCo and Senior Leaders support staff in understanding pupils' needs, implementing agreed strategies and reviewing the effectiveness of provision.

Staff are expected to apply relevant training and guidance in their day-to-day practice and seek further advice where pupils require additional support.

Social and Emotional Development

Compass School strives to improve pupils' emotional and social development through:

- A Pastoral Lead in each area of the school to support the development of social and emotional skills
- Social, physical, intellectual, creative and emotional lessons that support character development and cultural capital
- Bespoke interventions to develop social and emotional skills and support mental health needs

- A restorative practice approach to help pupils move forward positively following incidents
- A trauma-informed and nurturing hub system
- Referrals to relevant services, such as CAMHS and No Limits, where appropriate

We recognise that emotional well-being and a sense of safety and belonging are important to pupils' ability to access learning. Staff seek to understand the underlying needs and barriers that may affect engagement and provide appropriate support in collaboration with pupils, families and relevant professionals.

Transitions

Compass School recognises that transition periods can be difficult for pupils and their families. We work closely with families, receiving provisions and relevant professionals to support planned and positive transitions.

An individual transition package will be developed according to the pupil's needs and may include:

- Supported visits where appropriate
- Meetings with families, receiving provisions and other agencies
- Transition documents, including a bespoke Pupil Plan informed by the pupil's voice
- A transition timetable
- Social stories and visual supports
- Mock interviews
- Support with CV writing and application forms
- Support with attending interviews
- Liaison with other agencies to ensure relevant information is shared appropriately
- Transfer of relevant SEND information and records to support continuity of provision

For pupils approaching post-16 education, training or employment, transition planning will consider preparation for adulthood, independence, aspirations and the support required to access the next stage successfully.

For pupils with EHCPs, transition arrangements will be informed by their plan and relevant statutory review requirements.

Evaluating Effectiveness

At Compass School we regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the provision that has been made for the pupils. This is done through a variety of methods such as:

- Internal and external quality assurance.
- Analysis of academic and learning-to-learn data.
- Review of pupil progress and intervention outcomes.
- Feedback from Pupil Voice and a range of stakeholders.
- Review of the effectiveness of teaching adaptations and support arrangements.

- Analysis of pupils' next steps, including post-16 destinations and transitions to mainstream education or specialist provision.

Findings inform decisions about future provision, staff development, intervention planning and school improvement priorities.

Involving other Agencies:

Compass School works closely with external agencies to support pupils and their families. The school shares relevant information appropriately, attends meetings and coordinates support in collaboration with other professionals.

A half-termly review of pupils on the SEND register is held with the school's link Local Authority SEND Officer.

Where a pupil requires specialist assessment or additional support, the school will consider appropriate referrals and work with the pupil, family and relevant professionals to identify suitable next steps.

Information is shared in accordance with applicable data protection, confidentiality and safeguarding requirements.

Concerns and Complaints:

If you have any concerns regarding your child’s Special Educational Needs, please contact our SENCo, Lacey Weeks on 02380 215320.

Designate Teacher for Looked After Child

Dawn King is the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children. She oversees any children in the care of the Local Authority to ensure their needs are met.