



## SEND Policy

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| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Lauren Meston | <b>Date:</b> | 17/08/2026 |
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## Introduction

Future Pathways is committed to providing an inclusive, ambitious, trauma-informed and supportive alternative provision in which young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can participate, feel safe and make meaningful progress. We recognise that many young people referred to alternative provision have complex and overlapping educational, social, emotional, communication, health and safeguarding needs, and that unmet or unidentified SEND may contribute to difficulties with attendance, engagement, behaviour and previous educational placements.

This policy explains how Future Pathways identifies and responds to SEND, works with young people and families, contributes to statutory plans and reviews, makes reasonable adjustments, and works in partnership with commissioning schools, local authorities and external professionals. It should be read alongside the Inclusion, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Attendance, Accessibility and Children in Care policies.

## Aims

- promote high aspirations and positive outcomes for young people with SEND;
- identify barriers to learning and participation as early as possible and respond without waiting for a formal diagnosis;
- provide high-quality, adaptive teaching and a graduated response based on Assess, Plan, Do, Review;
- make reasonable adjustments so disabled young people are not placed at a substantial disadvantage;
- ensure the young person's voice, strengths, aspirations and preferred ways of communicating shape planning;
- work collaboratively with parents/carers, commissioning schools, local authorities and relevant professionals;
- ensure that Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan provision and outcomes relevant to Future Pathways are understood and delivered as agreed;
- recognise and respond to the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and communication barriers that can affect children with SEND;
- prepare young people for successful transition, reintegration and adulthood, including further education, employment, independence and community participation.

## Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been reviewed with regard to the current legal and statutory framework in England, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014, including Part 3 relating to SEND;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (current statutory guidance);
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled learners;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (effective from 1 September 2026);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Education Act 1996, including local authority duties relating to suitable education and alternative provision;
- Department for Education guidance on alternative provision and high-needs commissioning;
- current statutory attendance, behaviour and suspension/exclusion guidance where applicable;
- Ofqual and awarding-organisation requirements relating to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

The Government is consulting on wider SEND reform during 2026. Consultation proposals are not treated as current statutory requirements in this policy. Future Pathways will review and update this policy when any new legislation, Code of Practice or statutory guidance comes into force.

## What SEND means

A child or young person has special educational needs where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream education.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need. These are not labels and many young people have needs across more than one area:

- Communication and interaction, including speech, language, communication differences and autism-related needs;
- Cognition and learning, including specific and moderate learning difficulties;
- Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), including difficulties with emotional regulation, anxiety, attachment, trauma-related presentation and other mental-health needs;
- Sensory and/or physical needs, including visual, hearing, sensory-processing and physical needs.

A diagnosis is not required before support or reasonable adjustments can be put in place. Equally, not every difficulty with progress, attendance or behaviour means a young person has SEND; staff will explore possible underlying causes rather than making assumptions.

## **Future Pathways as an alternative provision**

Future Pathways receives young people through referral or commissioning arrangements. The precise statutory responsibilities for SEND depend on the legal status of the placement and the young person's registration arrangements. Where a young person remains on roll at a commissioning school, that school continues to hold its statutory responsibilities as applicable, while Future Pathways delivers the agreed provision, shares information and contributes to planning and review. Where the local authority has statutory duties, including duties connected with an EHC plan, those duties remain with the local authority.

At referral, Future Pathways will seek clarity about the purpose of the placement, expected outcomes, duration or review point, SEND status, EHC plan arrangements, reasonable adjustments, risk information and the responsibilities of each organisation. A placement at Future Pathways must not be used to avoid or dilute statutory SEND duties.

## **Identification and initial assessment**

SEND identification begins before or at referral and continues throughout the placement. Future Pathways will seek relevant information from the young person, parents/carers, commissioning school, local authority and involved professionals. This may include:

- current and previous SEND support plans, learner profiles and provision maps;
- EHC plans and the most recent annual review documents;
- educational psychology, speech and language, occupational therapy, CAMHS or other specialist advice;
- attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour information;
- safeguarding, medical and social-care information where it is lawful and necessary to share;
- known communication, sensory, regulation and accessibility needs;
- exam access arrangements or evidence being gathered for them;
- young person and parent/carer views, strengths, aspirations and what has or has not worked previously.

Baseline assessment may include literacy, numeracy, curriculum knowledge, communication, engagement, observation and discussion with the young person. Assessment will be proportionate and should not become a barrier to participation.

## **High-quality and adaptive teaching**

High-quality teaching, adapted to individual need, is the first response to young people who have or may have SEND. Additional interventions cannot compensate for consistently inaccessible teaching. Staff will plan from the learner's starting point and use reasonable, evidence-informed adaptations such as:

- clear routines, chunked instructions and visual or written prompts;
- appropriate pace, repetition, modelling and checking for understanding;
- adapted language and communication methods;
- reduced sensory load or access to a quieter learning space where needed;
- additional processing time and structured breaks;
- assistive technology or specialist equipment where appropriate;
- alternative ways to record, demonstrate or communicate learning;
- small-group or one-to-one support where this is part of the agreed plan;
- positive, trauma-informed approaches that promote emotional safety and regulation.

## **The graduated approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review**

Where a young person requires support that is additional to or different from ordinarily available provision, Future Pathways will use a graduated approach. The cycle is repeated and becomes increasingly personalised where necessary.

### **Assess**

Staff will build a clear picture of strengths, barriers, progress, attendance, engagement, communication and wellbeing. Assessment should draw on the young person's views, parent/carer information, teaching evidence and relevant professional advice. Behaviour or distress will not automatically be attributed to a known diagnosis or SEND without further exploration.

### **Plan**

The agreed support, adjustments, strategies, expected outcomes, responsible staff and review date will be recorded clearly. The young person and parent/carer should be involved wherever appropriate, and the commissioning school or local authority will be included where responsibilities are shared.

### **Do**

Teaching staff remain responsible for the young person's learning and progress, including where targeted interventions or specialist input are provided. Strategies and reasonable adjustments should be implemented consistently across relevant sessions.

### **Review**

The impact of support will be reviewed against agreed outcomes using progress information and learner, family and staff views. Reviews will decide whether support should continue, change, reduce or escalate. Significant concerns may lead to specialist referral, discussion with the commissioning school/local authority, or consideration of an EHC needs assessment where appropriate.

## **SEND support plans and learner profiles**

Where useful, Future Pathways will maintain a concise SEND support plan or learner profile that is practical for staff and understandable to the young person. It should focus on needs, strengths, communication, successful strategies, reasonable adjustments, risks, outcomes and review arrangements rather than diagnosis alone. Staff who teach or supervise the young person must have access to the information they need to support them safely and effectively.

## **Education, Health and Care plans**

Where a young person has an EHC plan, Future Pathways will obtain and read the current plan before or as soon as possible after placement. Staff will understand the sections relevant to needs, outcomes, provision, health, social care and placement. Future Pathways will deliver the provision it has agreed to provide and promptly raise any concern that the plan cannot be implemented as commissioned.

Future Pathways will contribute meaningfully to annual reviews and interim reviews, including evidence about progress, attendance, engagement, provision delivered, barriers, learner voice and recommended next steps. If needs or circumstances have changed significantly, an early review may be requested through the responsible school or local authority.

Future Pathways will not unilaterally change statutory provision specified in an EHC plan. Any proposed change must be addressed through the appropriate statutory or commissioning process.

## **Reasonable adjustments and disability**

SEND and disability overlap but are not identical. A disabled young person may require reasonable adjustments even if they are not identified as having SEN. Future Pathways will anticipate and make reasonable adjustments to policies, teaching, assessment, communication, physical access and participation where a disabled young person would otherwise be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments will be individual, proportionate and reviewed. Behaviour expectations will remain high, but staff will consider whether a young person's disability or SEND affects how an expectation can reasonably be met and whether an adjustment is required before or alongside a consequence.

## **Nurture and specialist support at Future Pathways**

Future Pathways offers a bespoke nurture provision for young people who require a smaller, SEND-supportive environment away from the main learning spaces. This includes access to small-group learning, tailored packages of education and support, and specialist SEND teaching expertise. Placement within nurture provision will be based on individual need and reviewed so that support remains purposeful and promotes progress, participation and independence.

Future Pathways is trauma-informed and recognises that trauma can interact with SEND, communication, regulation, attendance and learning. Trauma-informed practice will complement, not replace, appropriate SEND assessment and provision.

## **SEMH and mental health**

SEMH is one of the four broad areas of SEND, but mental-health difficulty does not automatically mean a young person has SEN. Where emotional or mental-health needs create a barrier to learning, Future Pathways will consider appropriate support, reasonable adjustments and the graduated approach. The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy sets out the role of the Mental Health First Aider, onsite trauma specialist, safeguarding escalation, CAMHS referrals and signposting to services such as Kooth.

## **Safeguarding young people with SEND**

Children with SEND or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges online and offline. Staff must remain alert to barriers that can make abuse, neglect or exploitation harder to recognise or report. These include:

- assuming changes in behaviour, mood, communication or injury are caused by a young person's condition without further exploration;
- being more prone to peer-group isolation or bullying, including prejudice-based bullying, without the same outward signs;
- communication difficulties or reliance on adults that can create barriers to disclosure;
- cognitive, sensory or social-communication differences that may increase vulnerability to grooming, exploitation or online harm;
- needs for intimate or personal care, physical assistance or medication that require clear professional boundaries.

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. SEND must never be used to explain away a safeguarding indicator. Lauren Meston, DSL, will ensure safeguarding responses take account of communication needs and reasonable adjustments.

## **Behaviour, attendance and exclusion risk**

Future Pathways will consider whether repeated absence, disengagement, distress or behaviour may indicate unmet SEND, ineffective provision, safeguarding concerns or other barriers. Support will not be withheld solely because behaviour is challenging. Likewise, SEND does not mean harmful behaviour is ignored; responses should combine safety, accountability, reasonable adjustment and support.

Where a placement is at risk of breakdown, Future Pathways will work with the commissioning school/local authority and relevant professionals before decisions are made, wherever circumstances allow. A placement review is not the same as a statutory suspension or permanent exclusion, and statutory processes remain the responsibility of the body with the relevant legal power.

## **Learner voice and participation**

Young people will be involved in decisions about their support in ways that are accessible to them. Staff will use appropriate communication methods and avoid professional jargon. The young person's aspirations, strengths, views about what helps, and experience of barriers will inform plans and reviews. Participation does not mean a young person carries responsibility for arranging their own support.

## **Working with parents and carers**

Future Pathways values parents and carers as partners. We will communicate respectfully, share relevant progress and concerns, seek their knowledge of the young person and involve them in planning and review

where appropriate. Information should be accessible and families should know who to contact if they have a concern about SEND provision.

## **Working with commissioning schools, local authorities and external agencies**

Future Pathways will work collaboratively with commissioning schools, Doncaster Council and other local authorities, health services, social care and specialist professionals. Depending on need, this may include educational psychology, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, sensory services, CAMHS, early help, youth services and voluntary-sector organisations.

Referrals will be made with appropriate consent or another lawful basis. Future Pathways will not delay urgent safeguarding action while waiting for a SEND referral or assessment.

## **Children in care and previously looked-after children**

Where a young person is looked after or previously looked after and also has SEND, Future Pathways will coordinate its contribution with the commissioning school's designated teacher, the Virtual School Head where applicable, social worker and SEND professionals. The Personal Education Plan and EHC plan should complement one another and avoid conflicting or duplicated actions.

## **Transition, reintegration and preparation for adulthood**

Transition planning will start early and be proportionate to the placement. Future Pathways will share relevant information securely and support transitions into Future Pathways, back to school, into another setting or into post-16 education, employment or training. For older learners, planning should support preparation for adulthood, including further education and employment, independent living, community participation, relationships, health and self-advocacy where relevant.

## **Careers and access to the wider curriculum**

Young people with SEND will be supported to access careers education, vocational learning, enrichment, trips and practical activities. Adjustments will be considered so that SEND does not become an unnecessary barrier to participation. Risk assessment should enable participation wherever reasonably practicable rather than defaulting to exclusion from an activity.

## **Assessment and exam access arrangements**

Where a young person may require access arrangements or reasonable adjustments for qualifications, Future Pathways will work with the relevant centre, commissioning school and awarding organisation. Arrangements must reflect the young person's normal way of working where required and be supported by the evidence and processes specified by the awarding organisation. They are intended to remove disadvantage, not change the knowledge or skills being assessed.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Lauren Meston - Managing Director and DSL**

- has overall organisational responsibility for implementation and review of this policy;
- ensures SEND is considered alongside safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and inclusion;
- ensures staff understand the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities that may affect young people with SEND;
- supports escalation where provision, placement or multi-agency arrangements are not meeting identified needs.

### **SEND Coordinator - Jack Hogg**

- coordinates the day-to-day SEND arrangements within Future Pathways;
- supports identification, assessment and the graduated approach;
- maintains oversight of SEND plans, learner profiles and relevant provision;
- liaises with young people, parents/carers, staff, commissioning schools, local authorities and external professionals;

- supports contributions to EHC plan reviews and requests for further assessment or advice;
- promotes staff development and consistent inclusive practice.

### **Teaching and support staff**

- are responsible for the progress and participation of the young people they teach or supervise;
- implement agreed strategies, reasonable adjustments and support consistently;
- identify and report emerging concerns promptly;
- contribute evidence to Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles and statutory reviews;
- seek support when an agreed strategy is ineffective rather than simply discontinuing it;
- remain alert to safeguarding concerns and avoid attributing them automatically to SEND.

### **Staff training**

Staff induction and continuing professional development will include SEND awareness relevant to role, inclusive and adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments, communication needs, SEMH, trauma-informed practice, safeguarding vulnerabilities and the implementation of individual plans. Additional training will be arranged where a young person's needs require specific knowledge or competency.

### **Information sharing, confidentiality and records**

SEND information is personal data and may include special-category information. Records will be accurate, relevant, secure and shared on a need-to-know basis with a lawful basis. Staff must have enough information to support the young person safely, while avoiding unnecessary disclosure of diagnosis or personal history.

Records should distinguish fact, professional advice, learner or parent view, and staff interpretation. Current plans should be clearly identifiable and superseded versions retained in line with the organisation's retention arrangements.

### **Complaints and concerns**

Concerns about SEND provision should normally be raised first with the SEND Coordinator. If the matter is not resolved, it may be escalated to Lauren Meston, Managing Director. Formal complaints will be considered under the Future Pathways Complaints Policy. Where the concern relates to provision specified in an EHC plan or a statutory decision of a local authority, the family may also have rights to use local authority disagreement-resolution, mediation or tribunal processes.

A complaint that contains a safeguarding concern will be dealt with immediately under safeguarding procedures rather than waiting for the complaints process to conclude.

### **Monitoring and review**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where legislation, the SEND Code of Practice, KCSIE or other statutory guidance changes. Future Pathways will monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision through progress, attendance, participation, behaviour and wellbeing information; learner and parent/carer feedback; placement reviews; outcomes of Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles; safeguarding information; and feedback from commissioning schools and professionals.

Patterns will be considered across groups to identify disproportionality or barriers to inclusion. Learning from complaints, placement breakdowns, incidents and successful interventions will be used to improve practice.

### **Related Future Pathways policies and documents**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Children in Care Policy
- Online Safety and Mobile Phone Policy
- Absconding / Leaving Without Permission Policy
- Supporting Young People with Medical Conditions / Medication Policy

- Accessibility Plan
- Complaints Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Individual risk assessments, EHC plans, SEND support plans and learner profiles

## **Reference guidance**

- Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care - SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Department for Education - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- HM Government - Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Department for Education - Alternative provision and high-needs commissioning guidance
- Equality Act 2010 and associated education duties
- City of Doncaster Council - SEND Toolkit and Graduated Approach guidance

## **Appendix 1 - SEND referral / placement information checklist**

- Current SEND status confirmed: no identified SEN / SEN Support / EHC plan.
- Current EHC plan and latest annual review received where applicable.
- Current SEND support plan / learner profile / provision map received.
- Young person's strengths, interests, aspirations and preferred communication recorded.
- Parent/carer views and contact arrangements confirmed.
- Commissioning school SENDCo / key contact identified.
- Local authority caseworker identified where applicable.
- Current specialist reports and professional recommendations received.
- Reasonable adjustments and accessibility requirements identified.
- Communication, sensory, regulation and medical needs understood.
- Attendance, behaviour and safeguarding information reviewed for possible SEND interaction.
- Exam access arrangements or evidence requirements identified.
- Purpose, outcomes and review point for the AP placement agreed.
- Responsibility for each element of provision and review agreed with commissioner.
- Any gaps in information escalated and followed up.

**Appendix 2 - Assess, Plan, Do, Review record**

**Young person:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date / review period:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Strengths and aspirations:**

**What is working well:**

**Primary barriers / needs identified:**

**Evidence considered (learner voice, assessment, attendance, behaviour, professional advice):**

**ASSESS - current picture and starting point:**

**PLAN - outcomes, strategies, adjustments and provision:**

**DO - what was delivered, by whom and how consistently:**

**REVIEW - impact, progress and learner/family views:**

**Decision: continue / adapt / reduce / escalate support:**

**Further professional advice or referral required:**

**Commissioning school / local authority actions:**

**Next review date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff responsible:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 3 - Staff quick guide: SEND and safeguarding

1. Do not assume behaviour, mood changes, injuries or distress are “because of SEND”. Explore and report concerns.
2. Listen to the young person and adapt communication so they can express what has happened.
3. Use the learner profile, EHC plan or agreed support plan, but do not allow paperwork to replace professional curiosity.
4. Make agreed reasonable adjustments consistently. If an adjustment is not working, seek review rather than simply stopping it.
5. Record emerging SEND concerns and share them with the SEND Coordinator promptly.
6. If there is a safeguarding concern, tell Lauren Meston, DSL, or a Deputy DSL immediately. Safeguarding action must not wait for SEND assessment or diagnosis.
7. If a young person is struggling with attendance or behaviour, consider unmet SEND, mental health, trauma and safeguarding alongside consequences or attendance action.
8. Keep expectations ambitious: SEND support should remove barriers and build independence, not lower aspirations.

### Approval

Signed: *L. Meston*

Lauren Meston - Managing Director, Future Pathways

Date: 16/08/2026

Next review due: 16/08/2027