

SEND Information Report

Version: V01

Date of issue: May 2025

Reviewed:

Date of Next Review May 2026

Policy Author: Eve Bartlet – Director of Education

Ratified by: Anita Cameron – Executive Headteacher



Helm Academy

EMPOWERING MINDS, NAVIGATING FUTURES

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Child Protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Helm Academy Virtual School documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

Policy Issues and Updates

Version Number	Created/ Reviewed/ Amended By	Date Created/ Reviewed/ Amended	Comment	Next Review Date
1	E.Bartlet	May 2025	Policy implemented	01/05/2026



Helm Academy

EMPOWERING MINDS, NAVIGATING FUTURES

The purpose of the plan

The purpose of this report is to describe our provision with regards to children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the principles upon which these are based.

Introduction:

This report highlights how we implement the SEND Policy at Helm Academy Virtual School

It identifies our provision for all our pupils and how the policy is fully implemented to support our pupils and ensure they make good progress. The SEND policy is available on the school website.

With the publication of 'The special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' in June 2014, it is essential that our ethos and practices reflect the statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education and the Department for Health. These duties, policies and procedures relate to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations:

- ✓ Children and Families Act 2014
- ✓ SEN Code of Practice 2014
- ✓ Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- ✓ Equality Act 2010

These associated regulations support and gives evidence to;

- ✓ Helm Academy Virtual School Accessibility Policy
- ✓ Helm Academy Virtual School Assessment and Admissions Policy
- ✓ Helm Academy Virtual School Curriculum Policy

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school's aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values.

School Aims:

Helm Academy Virtual School is a mixed 11-16, SEN day school, where every pupil is valued and treated as an individual and with respect.

The vision of our School is for all staff to proactively demonstrate a caring culture which nurtures aspirations, develops resilience and empowers the desire to learn.

Our culture is centred on our deep-rooted ethos to make a positive, lifelong difference to the lives of our pupils.

At Helm Academy Virtual School, we recognise that every child is different. Our pupils have access to a team of skilled teachers, therapists, and professionals who work together to ensure each child has a learning programme tailored to their specific needs.

We focus on enabling pupils to flourish by encouraging and building upon their individual strengths and interests. Our staff team work closely with them to develop and deploy strategies to overcome and manage their unique challenges and barriers to learning.

In addition to academic achievement, we aim to build emotional wellbeing and inner strength, to develop the children's social and independence skills. This principle is carefully structured through a personal development programme of therapy, enrichment activities, and bespoke learning, designed to strengthen confidence and self-esteem, through the experience of success.

Partnership working is central to our philosophy, and we are committed to working closely with our families to support the progress and wellbeing of their child. Families are offered the support and advocacy needed to feel assured and informed about their child's needs and future prospects. We are ambitious about our pupils and are deeply committed to ensuring that they have a rich and successful experience at Helm Academy Virtual School; well-prepared to enjoy a fulfilling and productive future.

Our Ethos can be summed up in our school branding statement:

- ✓ No Judgement
- ✓ No Blame
- ✓ No Shame

The kinds of SEN that are provided for our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- ✓ Communication and interaction, for example, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties.
- ✓ Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia.
- ✓ Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- ✓ Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, processing difficulties.

Definition of SEN:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- ✓ Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- ✓ Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools
- ✓ The term SEND K is used to identify pupils receiving additional support.
- ✓ The term SEND E is used to identify pupils who require additional provision, including EHCP.

At Helm Academy Virtual School we only receive pupils who are in receipt of an EHCP.

Disabled Children:

Many children who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Broad areas of need:

Communication and Interaction:

This describes pupils who have speech, language and communication needs displaying difficulties communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. Children and young people with ASD are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and Learning:

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate adaptations.

Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties:

Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or Physical needs:

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.

Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs:

We will assess each pupil's current skills and baseline levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers and members of the therapy team will make regular formative and summative assessments of progress for all pupils across social skills, behavioural presentations, therapeutic and educational outcomes; identifying those whose progress is less than expected. When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

Consulting and involving pupils and parents Prior to admission to the School, the Head of Admissions and other involved professionals will discuss with the pupil, their parents and the previous educational. These conversations will make sure that:

- ✓ Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty.
- ✓ We take into account the parents' concerns.
- ✓ Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- ✓ Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.
- ✓ Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's Transition and Admission Programme record and given to their parents.
- ✓ We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive SEN support.

Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes:

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review. The class or subject teacher will work with the Pupil Development Team to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- ✓ Observational assessments.
- ✓ The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil.
- ✓ The relevant outcomes/assessments from identified therapists.
- ✓ Their previous progress and attainment or behaviour.
- ✓ Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- ✓ The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data with similar presentations/diagnosis.
- ✓ The views and experience of parents/carers.
- ✓ The pupil's own views.
- ✓ Advice from external support services, if relevant.

The range of assessments will be triangulated and reviewed regularly. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

Interventions/therapy

We offer the following interventions for pupils as needed:

- ✓ Phonics
- ✓ Reading support (direct and classroom based)

- ✓ Maths intervention (direct and classroom based)
- ✓ Speech and Language Therapy (direct and classroom based)
- ✓ Occupational Therapy (direct and classroom based)
- ✓ Play Therapy
- ✓ Lego Therapy
- ✓ Mental health support
- ✓ ELSA
- ✓ MABB
- ✓ Enrichment activities

Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood:

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this. The young person will be supported through the initial and following stages of the implementation of an agreed comprehensive Transition Plan. They will be supported through accompanied acclimatisation visits, sharing of outcomes, information and strategies and induction material and visits.

Teaching and learning:

Our approach to teaching pupils with SEN Yarrow Heights School: Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN. This will be adapted for individual pupils. We will also provide the following interventions:

- ✓ All pupils will be allocated the resources they need to support their learning to include equipment, staffing and learning environment.
- ✓ Resources will be matched to pupils' needs and their suitability will be reviewed annually through the annual review process or as required.
- ✓ Curriculum subject resources will enable all pupils to effectively access the curriculum. The school will ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and will ensure that specialist facilities, equipment and links with outside agencies are used effectively to promote learning
- ✓ A technology-led curriculum to support those pupils who have prior disaffection or sensory needs and to deliver stimulating and engaging learning.
- ✓ Therapeutic strategies to support the removal of barriers to an individual child's enjoyment of learning.

Adaptions to the curriculum and leaning environment

We make the following adaptations to ensure all pupils' needs are met:

- ✓ High levels of differentiating our curriculum to ensure that all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, differentiation by outcome, etc.
- ✓ Adapting our resources and staffing.
- ✓ Range of teaching strategies and styles.
- ✓ Using recommended aids, such as technology, laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.

- ✓ Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, interest bespoke planning, etc.

Expertise and training of all staff:

Helm Academy Virtual School is an SEN School, where the staff team of educationalists, therapists, and pupil development team are all experienced in supporting children with SEN and have all undergone a full induction training programme and ongoing CPD, that addresses and discusses the range of presentations that the children may exhibit. The strategies that will be employed as a whole school setting to support each child will form part of the training and be under regular review.

Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision:

- ✓ Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term.
- ✓ Reviewing the impact of interventions after an agreed number of weeks, according to the nature of the therapeutic intervention.
- ✓ Using pupil questionnaires.
- ✓ Monitoring by the Leadership Team.
- ✓ Using provision maps to measure progress.
- ✓ Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans.

Engaging in Helm Academy Virtual School Enrichment Curriculum

- ✓ All of our extra-curricular after school and off-site activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before-and after school clubs.
- ✓ All pupils are encouraged to go on our trip(s).
- ✓ All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day/school plays/special workshops.
- ✓ No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability. The School's Accessibility Plan is available on the school's website or emailed upon request.

Working with other agencies:

As part of our Assessment and Admission process all relevant agencies are involved in the admission of a child to our School. Establishing all relevant contacts such as (GPs, CAMHs, Social Services, therapists etc.) and initiating, enabling and sustaining ongoing professional dialogue ensures a comprehensive team of professionals are supporting the child. The school will seek the views of the parent and the child in this multi-agency process.

Complaints and Concerns about SEN provision:

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy. The parents of pupils with disabilities have the right to make disability discrimination claims to the first tier SEND tribunal if they believe that our school has discriminated against their children.

They can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- ✓ Exclusions.
- ✓ Provision of education and associated services.
- ✓ Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

Links with other policies and documents

- ✓ Accessibility plan.
- ✓ Positive Behaviour Support Policy.
- ✓ Equality Statement.
- ✓ Supporting pupils with medical conditions.

Annual reviews:

At Helm Academy Virtual School we believe in the person-centred approach when conducting annual reviews, all parties involved in the pupils' support plan will be invited to attend the review. Parents and carers will be asked to complete a parent view form to give their view on the progress of their child, the pupil will also be asked to complete a My View's form to take their thoughts and feelings into account. During the review the pupil will be able give and hear about their strengths. Their view is built up around the views of the pupil and their supporting adults. SMART targets will be set termly, and strategies explained in how to achieve them.

Roles and responsibilities:

Every member of staff has a responsibility to ensure that pupils with SEND are included and able to access all areas of school life.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- ✓ Coordinating all the support for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and developing the school's SEND Policy to make sure all children receive a consistent, high-quality response to meeting their needs in school.
- ✓ making sure that there are excellent records of the child's progress and needs.
- ✓ Providing specialist support for teachers and support staff in the school so they can help children in the school achieve the best progress possible.
- ✓ Leading on CPD for all staff which can include SPD on the four areas of need.
- ✓ Giving staff briefings for key SEND pupils.

Contact:

If your child has specific needs that you would like to discuss in further detail, please feel free to contact Special Educational Needs coordinator:

Dr Beverly Burrows-Pye

Telephone: 0333 3584 485

Email: b.burrows-pye@helmacademy.co.uk

Complaints:

For formal complaints, please follow the school's complaints procedure which can be found on the school website or requested from the office.

Review of implementation

The implementation of this Policy is reviewed annually by the school's Senior Leadership Team in consultation with staff and a report is made to the Board.

The school may submit to Helm Academy Virtual School Board any proposals for amendments to this Policy.