

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Alison Smith Counselling and Play Therapy

Implemented: 7 September, 2026

To be reviewed: 7 September, 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the statutory requirements of the Children and Families Act of 2014 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) 0 – 25 Code of Practice are in place at Alison Smith Counselling and Play Therapy. Beyond that, this policy exists in order to ensure that all students who do have special educational needs and/or disabilities have those needs addressed efficiently and effectively.

Informed by

This policy complies with the statutory requirement set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 (2014), section 3.65, and has been written with reference to the following guidance and key documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (Feb 2013)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2014) • Schools SEND Information Report Regulations • Statutory guidance on ‘supporting pupils at school with medical conditions’ (2014) • Statutory exclusions guidance (2017) • Children and Families Act (2014)
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012):
- The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice: Protecting the vulnerable (2005)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Accessibility Plan

Aims

Alison Smith Counselling and Play Therapy aims to:

- offer equal access to students, according to their needs;
- identify and meet the special educational needs of individual students;
- inform all relevant parties of students’ needs;
- maximise students’ potential and raise confidence, expectations and self-esteem;

- ensure the Equalities Act 2010 duties for students with disabilities are met;

Content

This policy refers to the statutory definition of “special educational needs” i.e. “Children are identified as having SEND when they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age within the area of the Local Authority” (SEND CODE OF Practice 2014).

Students have additional educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for them.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of educational need (AEN):

- Communication & interaction - Students and young people with SEN may have difficulties in one or more of the areas of speech, language and communication. These children and young people need help to develop their linguistic competence in order to support their thinking, as well as their communication skills. Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or a physical or sensory impairment such as hearing loss may also lead to communication difficulties.
- Cognition & learning - Students and young people with learning difficulties will learn at a slower pace than other children and may have greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy or numeracy skills or in understanding concepts.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties – For some students, difficulties in their emotional and social development, can mean that they require additional and different provision in order for them to achieve. Children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may have undeveloped social skills and may struggle to make and sustain healthy relationships. This has a direct impact on their ability to access the school curriculum.
- Sensory and/or physical needs - There is a wide range of sensory and physical difficulties that affect children and young people across the ability range. Many children and young people require minor adaptations to the curriculum or the physical environment.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age.

Children have Social Emotional Mental Health difficulties if they;

- may have problems of mood (anxiety or depression), problems of conduct (oppositional defiance and more severe conduct problems including aggression), self-harming, substance abuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained;
- have immature social skills and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships. These difficulties may be displayed through the child becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour;

- may have recognised disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) attachment disorder, pervasive development disorder, an anxiety disorder, or, more rarely, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder;
- may have a diagnosed mental health condition such as attachment disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, high anxiety.

My ethos at Alison Smith Counselling and Play Therapy is that I meet each child and young person as an individual and without judgement. I believe that behaviour is communication and will always be curious about what I am being told or shown by that child or young person through their behaviours.