

SEND Policy

More Than Ed | Independent School

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1. Introduction and Vision

More Than Ed is a specialist independent school providing intensive support for students with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. All our students have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and experience significant barriers to learning that require highly specialised provision. Our vision is to provide a therapeutic educational environment where every student can develop academically, emotionally, and socially, despite the complex challenges they face. We believe that with the right support, delivered through our intensive 1:1 teaching model and trauma-informed approach, all our students can make meaningful progress toward their individual potential.

This policy outlines how we identify and meet the diverse needs within our student population, work collaboratively with families and professionals, and ensure that our provision enables every student to access education successfully. While all our students have identified special educational needs, we recognise that each young person is unique, with their own strengths, interests, and specific requirements that demand individualised responses.

2. Legislative Framework and Compliance

This policy operates in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the Children and Families Act (2014), the Equality Act (2010), and Keeping Children Safe in Education – KCSIE 2025. As an independent special school, we also comply with the requirements set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and work within the inspection framework of ISI and Ofsted. We maintain close working relationships with local authorities who commission places, ensuring our provision meets their quality standards and reporting requirements.

Our admissions policy reflects our specialist nature, accepting students whose primary need is SEMH but who may also have co-occurring learning difficulties, autism spectrum conditions, ADHD, attachment difficulties, or mental health diagnoses. We ensure that no student is discriminated against on the basis of their disability or additional needs, providing reasonable adjustments within our specialist framework to ensure equal access to all aspects of school life.

3. Identification, Assessment and Provision

Initial Assessment and Baseline

Upon admission, each student undergoes comprehensive assessment to establish baselines and identify specific needs beyond those already documented in their EHCP. This process involves reviewing all available documentation including previous school reports, educational psychology assessments, CAMHS reports, and any other professional evaluations. Academic baseline assessments are conducted sensitively, recognising that many of our students have had disrupted education and may experience anxiety around formal testing. We assess not just academic levels but also learning styles, sensory preferences, emotional regulation capacity, and social communication needs.

Within the first half-term, the SENCO develops a detailed Individual Education Plan (IEP) that translates EHCP outcomes into specific, measurable targets. This plan identifies the student's strengths and interests that can be built upon, specific barriers to learning and

strategies to address them, and preferred methods of communication and emotional regulation techniques. The IEP also outlines any additional therapeutic interventions required and how these integrate with the educational program.

Ongoing Assessment and Adaptation

Our 1:1 teaching model allows for continuous assessment and immediate adaptation of support strategies. Each student's designated team of three to four staff members maintains detailed daily records of progress, challenges, and successful interventions. These observations are fed down the appropriate channels and strategies are refined and support adjusted in real-time. This responsive approach means we can identify emerging needs quickly and adapt our provision before difficulties become entrenched.

Formal reviews of progress occur termly, involving all professionals working with the student. These reviews examine progress against individualised targets, development in emotional regulation and mental health, social skill development and relationship building, and progress toward EHCP outcomes and preparation for adulthood goals. Where students are not making expected progress, we conduct deeper analysis to identify barriers, consulting with external specialists such as educational psychologists, and speech and language therapists.

Graduated Response

While all our students require significant support, we implement a graduated response within our specialist provision. Some students may need enhanced support during particular periods, such as increased therapeutic input during mental health crises, modified timetables during periods of heightened anxiety, additional sensory breaks or movement opportunities, or temporary adjustment to academic expectations while stabilising emotional needs. These adaptations are made flexibly and responsively, always maintaining our core 1:1 support while adding additional resources as needed.

4. Teaching and Learning Approaches

Curriculum Adaptation

Our curriculum is fundamentally adapted to meet SEMH needs while maintaining appropriate academic challenge. Every subject is delivered through a trauma-informed lens, with content and delivery methods adjusted to each student's emotional and cognitive capacity. Core subjects are prioritised but delivered in creative ways that engage students who may have developed negative associations with traditional teaching. We emphasise practical, real-world applications of learning to maintain motivation and demonstrate relevance.

The curriculum is delivered flexibly within our 1:1 model, allowing teachers to respond immediately to a student's emotional state and capacity on any given day. If a student arrives dysregulated, the morning might begin with regulation activities before attempting academic work. Learning is chunked into manageable segments with regular breaks, and teachers use a variety of multisensory approaches to maintain engagement and support different learning styles.

Therapeutic Integration

Education and therapy are not separate entities in our provision but are fully integrated throughout the school day. Our teaching staff are trained in therapeutic approaches including trauma-informed practice and attachment-aware strategies. This means that therapeutic support is embedded within academic learning, with teachers able to recognise triggers, support emotional regulation, and use therapeutic language and approaches within lessons.

Specialist therapeutic interventions, such as art therapy, play therapy, or counselling, are timetabled to complement rather than extract from education. Therapists communicate regularly with teaching teams to ensure strategies are consistent and learning from therapy sessions can be reinforced in the classroom. This integrated model means students don't experience the fragmentation of being pulled in different directions but receive coherent, wrapped-around support.

Environmental Adaptations

Our physical environment is carefully designed to meet the sensory and emotional needs of SEMH students. Each student has their own classroom base, providing a predictable, secure environment that they can personalise and where they can retreat when overwhelmed. Classrooms include quiet spaces or sensory corners where students can regulate, with access to sensory resources such as fidget tools, or noise-reducing headphones.

Lighting, acoustics, and visual stimulation are all carefully considered to avoid sensory overload. Displays are purposeful rather than overwhelming, and students have input into their environmental preferences. The wider school environment includes therapeutic spaces such as a calm room, outdoor learning areas, and physical activity spaces that provide alternatives when classroom learning becomes challenging.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

SENCO Responsibilities

Our SENCO works strategically across the school to ensure high-quality SEND provision, though in practice all our staff are specialists in SEND. The SENCO maintains oversight of all EHCPs, ensuring provision specified is delivered and reviewed appropriately. They coordinate annual reviews, preparing comprehensive reports that demonstrate progress and identify future needs. The SENCO liaises with local authorities, attending panels and providing evidence for placement continuation or transition planning.

The SENCO leads on staff development, ensuring all team members are equipped with the latest understanding of SEMH needs and evidence-based interventions. They coordinate with external professionals, managing referrals and ensuring recommendations are implemented effectively. Quality assurance of SEND provision is ongoing, with the SENCO monitoring the impact of interventions and ensuring consistency of approach across different staff.

Teaching Staff Responsibilities

In our 1:1 model, teaching staff carry significant responsibility for SEND provision. Each teacher must thoroughly understand their student's EHCP and work toward achieving specified outcomes. They maintain detailed records of progress, strategies used, and impact of interventions, providing rich data for reviews. Teachers adapt all learning materials and

approaches to meet individual needs, drawing on training and support from specialists as needed.

Daily communication within the staff team ensures consistency of approach, with thorough handovers maintaining continuity when staff rotate. Teachers must recognise when additional support is needed and communicate this promptly to the SENCO or the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). They work in genuine partnership with parents and carers, sharing successes and challenges openly while maintaining professional boundaries.

Leadership and Governance

The Proprietor/Head Teacher ensures that SEND provision is adequately resourced and that staff receive appropriate training and support. They maintain strategic oversight of provision quality, using data and feedback to drive continuous improvement. Regular review of this policy and its implementation ensures we remain compliant with legislation and responsive to our students' evolving needs. The SLT creates a culture where meeting complex SEND needs is seen as our core purpose, not an additional burden, and where staff are supported in this challenging work.

6. Partnership Working

Parent and Carer Partnership

Parents and carers are extremely important in their child's school life, and we work to establish genuine partnerships from the point of admission. Initial meetings explore not just the student's needs but also family strengths, concerns, and goals. We recognise that parenting a child with SEMH needs is challenging, and we provide support and understanding rather than judgment. Regular communication maintains these partnerships, with daily contact for all families.

Parents/carers are fully involved in all review processes, with their views actively sought and valued. We provide clear explanations of our approaches and strategies, offering training where parents want to implement similar approaches at home. When challenges arise, we work where possible, collaboratively to problem-solve, recognising that consistency between home and school supports better outcomes. We also signpost to parent support services and respite opportunities, understanding that supporting the whole family ultimately benefits the student.

Multi-Agency Collaboration

Our students typically have involvement from multiple agencies, and effective coordination is essential. We maintain strong working relationships with all agencies, and actively encourage communication within between all stakeholders. Social workers are welcomed as partners, with regular communication ensuring educational and social care plans align. We work closely with therapists, whether commissioned directly or provided externally, ensuring their input enhances rather than fragments the student's experience.

Regular professionals' meetings bring together everyone involved in supporting a student, ensuring coordinated planning and consistent approaches. We share information appropriately, always with proper consent, recognising that effective support requires transparency between agencies. Where students are looked after by the local authority, we

ensure Personal Education Plans (PEP) complement EHCPs, with Virtual School involvement supporting improved outcomes.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of our SEND provision is monitored through multiple mechanisms that capture both quantitative progress and qualitative improvements in wellbeing. Individual student progress is tracked against EHCP outcomes, IEP targets, and academic assessments, but we also monitor softer indicators such as reduced behavioural incidents, increased engagement in learning, and improved peer relationships. These holistic measures recognise that for SEMH students, progress is not always linear or easily quantified.

Whole-school evaluation involves analysing patterns across the student population to identify what interventions are most effective, which staff training has had the greatest impact, and where additional resources might be needed. Student voice is actively sought through appropriate means, recognising that traditional surveys may not be accessible to all our students.

Annual review of this policy involves all stakeholders, including staff, parents, students where appropriate, and local authority representatives. This ensures our provision remains responsive to the changing needs of our population and incorporates new evidence-based practices as they emerge. External evaluation through inspection and local authority quality assurance visits provides additional scrutiny and validation of our SEND provision's effectiveness.