



# Lonsdale School

## SEND Policy & Working Practice

This document is based upon the  
DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years  
January 2015 (updated 30 April 2020)

Other information sources include:-  
Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013  
Schools SEN Information Report Regulations 2014  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1530/schedule/1/made>

<b>Headteacher</b>	<b>Claudia Thiele</b>		
<b>Chair of Governors</b>	<b>Chandra Green</b>		

<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>September 2026</b>
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Lonsdale School subscribes to principles underlying the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Code of Practice 2015.

The SEND Code of Practice describes the principles that are to be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities. This includes:

- taking into account the views of children, young people and their families
- enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision-making
- collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- identifying the needs of children and young people
- making high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people
- focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning
- helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood

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## INTRODUCTION

Lonsdale School is for pupils with Physical and Neurological Impairments (PNI). As a special school, all of our pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) with their main presenting need being physical. Each pupil has unique and sometimes complex needs in addition to a physical or neurological impairment. Pupils may have a sensory loss, a medical condition or associated difficulty in learning. The partnership between home, school, health services, private therapists and other professionals is of vital importance. At Lonsdale we support our pupils to aspire to do the very best that they can and to have a fulfilling life and contribute to society.

### SECTION 1:

**ADMISSIONS:** All pupils at Lonsdale are referred by local authorities, because it is felt that their needs cannot be met in a mainstream setting. All pupils on roll will have an EHCP, which details their specific needs. School caters for pupils with physical and neurological impairments, and these are often accompanied by other difficulties.

The key needs of the Lonsdale pupils are:

**PHYSICAL AND SENSORY:** All of our pupils have a physical disability, and their physical programmes are vital in ensuring they are comfortable and ready to access education and that they are able to maintain or improve their physical condition. Some students have progressive and degenerative conditions. The aim is to maintain these pupils' wellbeing and physical skills for as long as possible. School works closely with a team of NHS Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists to achieve this, and pupils use a wide range of equipment to support them throughout their day.

A specialist NHS Speech and Language Therapist assesses those pupils with physical difficulties that affect their eating and drinking. Individual eating and drinking plans are drawn up and then followed/implemented by trained school staff, including teachers, LSAs, care workers and MSAs.

Many of our pupils also have visual, hearing and/or other sensory impairments. Advisory teachers monitor those pupils regularly and give staff strategies to support the pupils and resources to enable them to access the curriculum.

**COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION:** Many of our pupils have communication difficulties as a result of their conditions. They may be unable to express themselves verbally, and many have communication books or devices to support them with their communication. Other means are also explored to enable all pupils to have a voice. We work closely with a team of Speech and Language Therapists and our Communication Support Team. They, in turn, work closely with the NHS Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy teams to ensure that pupils can access their devices using the most effective means possible.

**COGNITION AND LEARNING:** Our pupils cover a very wide spectrum of academic needs. We have pupils working at their appropriate expected age levels and some working below age-related expectations. Class teams work with all professionals to ensure our pupils are as ready to access education, by being well and having the correct equipment and resources. The New Horizons Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) will assist in the meeting of their very specific needs

and help them to make progress in academic and non-academic areas of their learning. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is based on the National Curriculum.

**SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH:** Some pupils experience behaviour difficulties. Staff are trained in the Hertfordshire Therapeutic Thinking programme and follow the principles of positive handling and de-escalation to support pupils and ensure that their behaviour does not impede their education and interaction with others. Staff ensure that the underlying reasons for such behaviours are identified within the context of each pupil.

Many of our pupils will experience emotional difficulties, some due to coping with their disability, especially if it is of a degenerative nature, and some due to growing up and experiencing the worries and anxieties associated with this. As well as all staff having a responsibility to support and monitor these pupils, we have access to external therapists, such as Nordoff Robins.

School has trained and identified Mental-Health First Aiders and is supported through an Educational Mental Health Practitioner trained in evidence-based interventions as part of the NHS/DfE jointly-delivered initiative to create [Mental Health Support Teams \(MHSTs\)](#) in education settings. The MHST acts as a link with local children and young people's mental health (CYPMH) services and is supervised by NHS staff.

Some pupils have medical conditions associated with their physical disabilities. We have teams of NHS nurses and clinical care workers on-site. These ensure that the pupils are able to maintain their health and wellbeing throughout the school day and that their medical needs are met.

## **SECTION 2**

### **AIMS**

- To provide and develop the best education and care, matched to the physical, communication and developmental needs of every individual promoting life-long learning
- To provide a high quality, well-resourced and secure environment and develop the independence and autonomy of every individual
- To teach pupils and support families to apply their rights and entitlement positively as citizens and demonstrate respect and value of others
- To develop the confidence, independence, self-worth, spiritual and moral values of each individual
- To work within the guidance provide in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)
- To provide high quality advice and outreach to families and other schools in the geographic area.

## OBJECTIVES

### TEACHING PROVISION:

School is organised in a three section linear model:

1. Early Years Foundation Stage
2. Primary (KS1 and KS2)
3. Secondary/Upper School incl. Post 16 (KS3, KS4 and KS5)

The average class size is eight to ten pupils. Classes are determined by the numbers of pupils in a particular age group and the physical, social and academic needs of the pupils. The high staff ratio of one teacher and, typically, two learning support assistants to a class allows for flexibility in teaching groups and individuals. The number of allocated support staff per class is determined by pupils' needs. The input of other professionals and the use of a wide range of specialised equipment ensure full access to the curriculum for all pupils.

**CURRICULUM:** We believe that all pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum based on the National Curriculum that is relevant to their needs. For some pupils this may mean accessing a modified and individualised curriculum.

Each pupil has an EHCP detailing their care, physical management and educational needs. All pupils have personalised eating & drinking plans and moving & handling plans. Others have individual risk assessments/management plans to support them at school.

Many pupils have medical difficulties and require ongoing treatment. Pupils are assessed for their care and physical needs and reviewed regularly. Care and therapy plans are formulated in partnership with parents. Pupils with medical needs are supported by paediatric nurses who are provided by East and North Herts Trust. A Paediatrician holds regular clinics in school.

Some pupils have speech, communication and/or eating and drinking difficulties. The LA funds a speech and language therapy (SaLT) service. Two part-time NHS Speech Therapists work in school to assess pupils, develop programmes, provide advice and support to school staff and parents. School can make referrals to this service. This is in addition to the Lonsdale Communication Support Team, who support communication, AAC and VOCA needs of our pupils in liaison with the SaLT team.

The majority of pupils have gross-motor and fine-motor impairments. East and North Herts Health Trust provide both Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy services in school.

Some pupils have visual, hearing and/or multisensory difficulties. LA Advisory teams work closely with the school to help assess pupils' needs, develop programmes and give advice, training and support to staff, pupils and parents.

Staff blend professional advice about each student into a comprehensive, relevant and manageable programme for that student and the classroom team. Integrating this advice and meeting the complex needs for a diverse group of pupils can be challenging for teachers and support staff. Class teams have to integrate pupils' physical management programmes into the daily routines and negotiate a manageable programme for the group. It is important to ensure that the educational, physical, health and communication needs are balanced, and one does not compromise the other.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Lonsdale School shares a site with Marriotts (a mainstream 11-18 school). Lonsdale is fully accessible. Each class and other main rooms have overhead hoists, as do many of the bathrooms.

Lonsdale School has a swimming pool and a range of specialist rooms that include Food Technology, Science/Art and Music/Drama. Other spaces include a library, the main hall, a dining area and conventional classrooms. There is also a sensory room. Group rooms and breakout areas provide further spaces where individual pupils and small groups can work. There are lifts to the first floor where the Nurses and Physios/OTs are based.

Pupils have access to computers or laptops in each class. A wide range of input devices, (e.g. tracker balls, touch screens, switches, eye-gaze computers etc.) are used. There is a variety of mobility systems including switch-controlled power chairs, height-adjustable furniture and changing beds, well equipped bathrooms, hoists, etc. There are also a wide range of resources which help pupils to overcome their physical and related difficulties such as specialised feeding equipment, scissors and magnifying devices. School has three tail-lift minibuses and one people carrier that can take up to three wheelchairs.

**VALUES AND CONFIDENCE:** By ensuring that pupils have the correct curriculum, resources, equipment, appropriate staffing, a means of communicating (communication devices, signs, symbols) and a safe and secure environment, Lonsdale School is able to deliver an education that encompasses both skills and values and focuses on developing the whole person. Curricular activities include lunchtime clubs, after-school activities, sports activities and educational visits will enable pupils to gain confidence, resilience and self-esteem as they put their skills into practice.

### **SECTION 3:**

#### **IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Pupils are initially assessed against the admissions criteria through their Statutory SEND paperwork. They will then visit school, and this, together with parental comments, liaison with other professionals working with the pupil at that time and the assessments contained within the paperwork, will inform our decision. A decision of suitability is then communicated to the pupil's local authority, who then decides whether they offer a place to the pupil.

The purpose of identifying special educational needs is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit a pupil into a category. At Lonsdale, we consider the needs of the 'whole' person, and this includes the special educational needs of the child or young person.

Other factors may impact on progress and attainment, and these are always taken into account:

- Disability ( the Code of Practice, outlines the "reasonable adjustment " duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation – these alone do not constitute SEN)
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL/EFL
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium allowance

- Being a Child Looked After
- Being a child of Service Personnel

#### **SECTION 4:**

#### **MANAGING PUPILS' NEEDS**

##### A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

- When pupils have a place at Lonsdale School, a period of transition will be organised in a way that meets the needs of that pupil. This transition period will also enable other professionals to assess the pupil and for appropriate resources to be put in place. School staff will also meet the parents and may visit the pupil in their previous setting.
- Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
- High-quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have SEND.
- Additional intervention and support which complements good quality teaching will be put in place.

Pupils have Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) and targets that are linked to the outcomes detailed in their EHCP. These are regularly and carefully reviewed, as is the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. Where necessary, training is provided to improve teachers' understanding and knowledge of strategies to identify and support pupils. We also have NHS onsite-input from the Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy teams, who provide specialised assessments and support.

The key process for all parties in evaluating the appropriateness of SEND support is the involvement in the Person Centred Annual Review (PCAR) meeting, where the EHCP is reviewed.

As a PNI school, there is access to a wide range of professionals. However, if we identify that a pupil is not making expected progress or has an additional difficulty, we will access advice and input from external professionals. This is done via a Service Request form, which is completed in liaison with parents / carers and sent to the appropriate team.

#### **The Person Centred Annual Review (PCAR) procedure:**

- A date is set at the beginning of the school year for the Person-Centred Annual Review of the pupil's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- The LA is informed of this Annual Review Schedule with an open invitation to attend all review meetings.
- The review date will normally be the anniversary of the date when their EHCP was completed, but this may change at transition times to implement strategies to ensure a seamless transition into the next stage of the pupil's education.

**Responsibility for PCARs at Lonsdale School:**

- The Head has delegated part of the responsibility for the Annual Review process to class teachers as part of their “SENCO” role for which they receive an SEN allowance.

**The Process of Preparing for PCAR at Lonsdale School****In order to set up a PCAR the Office Administrator will:**

- Provide class teachers with a list of the dates for the PCARs that need to be held each term. This list will be prepared in consultation with the Head, with reference to the school list of Annual Review dates.
- The standard school letter should be sent to all persons concerned inviting attendance at the review. This letter also requests their contribution in writing and gives a date by which this information should be returned to school. Due notice should be taken of the Privacy Notice and the sending of confidential data.
- Parents should be encouraged to attend, either virtually or in person, but where this is not possible, views should be sought, in writing, using the EHCP Parent/Carer views form.
- Where parents decline to attend a review, the meeting will go ahead with teachers and other appropriate persons present.
- School should consider rearranging the date of the meeting if key persons are unable to attend.

**In order to set up a PCAR, the Class Teacher will:**

- Prepare for the meeting by identifying educational progress and developments.

**The Person-Centred Annual Review Meeting:**

- Annual Review meetings are held during the school day and are chaired by a Senior or Middle Leader.
- The meeting should follow the procedures as laid down in the Code of Practice. Notes will be kept to detail persons present, the views about what is working well or not so well and a list of agreed actions.
- Those present at the meeting should, in the light of the issues raised in the report and discussion consider:
  1. Do the aims and outcomes of the EHCP remain appropriate?
  2. Are any amendments to the EHCP required?
  3. Should the LA continue to maintain the EHCP, or should the LA be recommended to cease the plan?
  4. Any new targets to be set to meet the outcomes set out in the EHCP?

The meeting will consider the draft review and any other contributions, including written contributions.

- The current ILP will be discussed and any changes agreed.

A review meeting may make recommendations on any of the matters above.

Amendments to the EHCP are likely to be recommended if:

- Significant new evidence has emerged which is not recorded on the EHCP
- Significant Outcomes recorded on the EHCP are no longer present or relevant
- Provision amendments are required to meet the child's/young person's changing needs and the targets specified at the review meeting

### **Action Following the Person Centred Annual Review meeting**

- A Senior or Middle Leader will produce the final version of the PCAR and agree this with the Head.
- The Head will sign the report.

The Office Administrator will ensure that:

1. The suggested EHCP amendments and all related meeting notes are sent to the LA not later than 10 school days after the meeting using HCC's Liquid Logic platform
2. A copy is available for the school file
3. Actions from the Annual Review meeting are circulated as applicable to parents, Lonsdale staff and other teams

The Office Administrator will also complete the PCAR process check-sheet and will update the PCAR database each term.

The Class Teacher will ensure that actions for the school as agreed in the meeting are followed through and make any changes to care plans and New Horizons documentation in line with new outcomes and/or aims agreed in the PCAR meeting.

### **Individual Learning Plans**

1. All pupils have Horizon Targets. These are termed SMART targets as identified in their EHCP. An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) combines the above targets, academic targets and other focus areas important to the individual.
2. Within six weeks of entry to the school, all pupils will have a New Horizons Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and Horizon Targets in place.
3. The ILP and Horizon Targets will be devised by the class teacher with reference to the EHCP and/or the targets outlined in the most recent review.
4. The ILP and Horizon Targets will be shared with parents and carers.
5. The Horizon Targets are SMART learning targets and support programmes for all EHCP outcomes. The targets will be drawn up with input from the pupil, parents and all professionals working with the pupil.
6. ILPs and Horizon Targets will be monitored regularly and form part of on-going pupil monitoring.
7. Horizon Targets will be set/reviewed in September, January and April. When targets are achieved, new targets will be set.
8. These targets will also be used for monitoring whole-school progress.

### **Additional reporting to Parents**

A summative annual report giving details of progress and achievement is sent to parents in the Summer Term. This report will also give details of progress in Teacher Assessments and where appropriate National Tests.

**Other Agencies:** Multi-agency work is important. We will work in collaboration with all agencies especially those concerned with education, health, welfare and social development to support the needs of children and young people within the school.

School has good working relationships with the following agencies and includes, for example:-

- Social Services: Many pupils have a named social worker. We are jointly involved with Social Services on Care Plans for Children Looked After (CLA).
- The Learning Disabilities Team.
- Educational Psychologist
- School Doctor: The community paediatrician holds regular clinics at school and sees each pupil at least once a year as part of the review system
- Visually Impaired Service
- Hearing Impaired Service
- Physiotherapy Service
- Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Occupational Therapy Service
- The PNI Advisory Service
- Wheelchair Service
- School Nurses

### **SECTION 5: CRITERIA FOR ENDING AN EHCP**

Should a pupil return to a mainstream setting and all elements of the EHCP outcomes are complete (i.e. that the child is operating academically, socially, emotionally and physically at an age-appropriate level), then consideration for the ending of the EHCP will be made.

### **SECTION 6: SUPPORTING PUPILS AND FAMILIES**

At Lonsdale School we believe that links between home and school work best when parents are positively encouraged to come into school and to work closely with the school in order to benefit the child. Links between home and school will be strengthened when:

- Teachers take parents' views seriously
- There is good communication
- Parents do not feel threatened
- Parents are given clear guidance on how they may help in school
- School is welcoming and encouraging.
- Home and school adopt a joint approach to challenges
- Parents are actively encouraged to be part of the learning support for their child

Before a child is admitted to the school, parents are invited to visit the school and, where possible or appropriate, members of staff make home visits. There is an induction period for most pupils including spending part of a day in their new class.

For Foundation Stage pupils, staff may visit pre-school provisions and the home in order to get a full picture of a child before they start school.

There are regular social and fundraising events.

Each child has a home /school planner, and parents are encouraged to communicate with the school. Parents may contact the school at any time to make an appointment to see/speak to their child's teacher or a senior member of staff.

Parents contribute to Person-Centred Annual Reviews (PCARs) and ILPs.

There are opportunities for parents to support their children through paired reading, learning words for reading and spelling etc. or following up speech and physical management programmes. Teachers will communicate with parents either by the contact book, by telephone or email if there is any minor query or problem. Parents are invited to school assemblies, plays, concerts and school events as applicable.

## **SECTION 7: SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including educational visits and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disadvantaged, and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Some may also have severe or life-threatening medical conditions for which arrangements will be put into place on an individual need basis. The school's policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions complies with guidance in Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions.

## **SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEND**

School closely monitors progress and wellbeing of all pupils. SLT and Governors monitor the quality of teaching, curriculum and pupil progress.

The evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils. A cycle of moderation is in place to ensure pupil progress is regularly assessed. Teachers analyse the data to identify any difficulties pupils may be having, explore possible reasons, and then take action to close the gap between expected and actual progress. Monitoring meetings are conducted by SLT.

School surveys the pupils, parents and staff to monitor their views as to how the school is meeting the needs of its pupils.

## **SECTION 9: TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

Training needs will be identified through Appraisal and Professional Development processes and should be linked to Lonsdale's Strategic Plan.

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision and to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils, all staff are encouraged to undertake appropriate CPD training and development.

All teachers and support staff undertake induction upon taking up a post.

## **SECTION 10: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Lonsdale Governing Board is involved in all aspects of school life. Governors are charged with managing efficiently the finance and resources and ensuring that the school delivers a high standard of education appropriate for pupils with SEND.

## **SECTION 11: STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION**

Pupil information is held securely both on the Schools Information Management System (SIMS) and in locked cabinets in the Admin office. The information will be available to teachers, and where appropriate support staff and shared, when applicable, with other professionals working with the child.

This is in accordance with the Lonsdale GDPR Data Protection Policy and Data Security Policy.<sup>1</sup>

## **SECTION 12: REVIEWING THE SEND POLICY**

This Policy will be reviewed annually by SLT and Governors in accordance with the following criteria in that it:

- Continues to support the provision of education for pupils within the school.
- Meets statutory requirements.
- Supports Hertfordshire's SEND Strategy
- Provides information that is relevant for parents, staff and other professionals.
- Meets the requirements of OFSTED

## **SECTION 13: ACCESSIBILITY**

School has a detailed Accessibility Plan. This document is approved by SLT and governors and is available for scrutiny upon request.

## **SECTION 14: DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

All complaints that cannot be dealt with by reference to the class teacher should be brought to the attention of the Head.

If the problems cannot be resolved in discussion with the Head, then parents have the right to follow the official complaints procedure as detailed on the school website [www.lonsdale.herts.sch.uk](http://www.lonsdale.herts.sch.uk)

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<sup>1</sup> Ratified by School Governors October 2025

**SECTION 15: BULLYING**

Although incidents are rare, school remains vigilant to protect pupils. Specific procedures are detailed in the Anti-Bullying Policy.

**SECTION 16: APPENDIX**

CODE OF PRACTICE 2015

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

**COMPLIANCE**

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (date 2015) 3.65,6.2,6.79 and 6.81 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013  
SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)  
Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)

The public sector equality duty of the Equality Act 2010 has also been considered in the writing of this policy. A Discrimination Impact Assessment concludes that through this policy Lonsdale School seeks to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Protected Characteristics: age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation.