Applecroft School



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

Person Responsible:	Assistant Headteacher
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Issue:	May 2026
Review Date:	May 2027

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy

1) **Introduction:**

Our aims and objectives:

School Vision:

'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life.'

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

School Vision for Inclusion

At Applecroft School we are ambitious for each and every child and believe that every individual deserves an outstanding education regardless of their starting points or individual barriers.

We are an inclusive school with the needs of the 'whole child' at the heart of all we do. We see every child as an individual with great potential and are relentless in our desire to support and nurture them to achieve their very best.

We passionately believe in equality and equity for all. Through a personalised approach to learning, starting with each child's strengths, we work proactively and collaboratively with parents to learn from each other and collectively provide the best possible opportunities, experiences and happy memories that will last a lifetime.

Aims:

In order to achieve this, we aim to:

- Ensure that all children make the best possible progress they are capable of and have opportunities to experience success
- Identify pupils with special educational needs and disabilities as early as possible and ensure that their needs are provided for and regularly reviewed/assessed through our Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle and Individual Learning Plans
- Ensure that all pupils receive appropriate educational provision, through an environment that is inclusive, and a broad and balanced curriculum that is reasonably adjusted and well scaffolded to demonstrate coherence and progression in learning and meet the individual needs of each child
- Enable all pupils, regardless of individual special educational needs and disabilities, have full access to the school curriculum and equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of school life, as far as is possible
- Ensure that all pupils have a voice and are able to express their views in decisions affecting their education, where appropriate

- Work collaboratively and productively with parents, other professionals and support services, to ensure that there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable learners
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for pupil's special educational needs
- Ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil's needs through targeted continued professional development opportunities
- Ensure that all pupils are supported through transitions both between and within school settings

School SEND Context:

In our school community we currently have (compared to Hertfordshire and National data):

% of pupils with SEND: 12.99% (Hertfordshire = 18.5%, National = 19.5%)

% of pupils with EHC plan: 2.86% (Hertfordshire = 4.3%, National = 5.3%)

% of pupils receiving SEND support: 10.13% (Hertfordshire = 14.2%, National = 14.2%)

Primary EHCP Need: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Primary SEND Support Need: Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

This policy has been written to complement our School Aims and Vision and should be read in conjunction with our SEND Information Report and Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy which are available to access on our school website. In writing this policy, full consideration has been given to the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years (January 2015) and with regards to the following guidance and documents:

- The Children and Families Act (2014),
- The Equality Act (2010)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014)

We recognise that many children who have SEN, may, under the Equality Act (2010), have a disability. This is defined as "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". Not all pupils with disabilities have special educational needs and not all pupils with SEND meet the definition of disability but this policy covers all of these pupils.

For information about support for pupils with medical conditions, please read this policy in conjunction with our 'Supporting Children with Medical Needs' policy which can be found on our school website.

Ms Ruth Johnson, our Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Wellbeing, is our school Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo). She can be contacted through the school office (01707 323758) or via email at: senco@applecroft.herts.sch.uk

2) Identification of Special Educational Needs:

According to the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015), a child or young person is identified with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) *"if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age".*

At Applecroft, we track and monitor the progress of all of our children and have regular opportunities to discuss any concerns that we have, as well as to celebrate achievements. Where a child's progress and attainment is lower than expected, this will be investigated further. This may be in their academic attainment but may be in other areas within their wider development such as social and emotional needs.

A child's needs may fall into one or more of the following four broad areas of need, as identified in the SEND Code of Practice:

Communication and Interaction

Some children may have difficulties with how they communicate with others or how they understand language. This might mean they have difficulties with:

- Saying what they want or need
- Using clear speech sounds
- Understanding instructions or questions
- Joining in conversations or play with other children
- Express their thoughts or feelings clearly

Children who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.

Cognition and Learning

This area covers children who find learning more difficult than others, or who learn at a slower pace. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:

- Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia
- Moderate learning difficulties
- Severe learning difficulties
- Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders Some children may struggle with their emotions, behaviour, or mental wellbeing, which can affect how they feel about school and learning. This may include difficulties in the following areas:

- Managing emotions such as anxiety or anger
- Making and keeping friendships,
- Following rules
- Coping with change
- Self-esteem

Children who may have attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder or have suffered adverse childhood experiences often have needs that fall in this category.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs
Children in this area may have physical difficulties or sensory sensitivities that affect their access to learning. This can include:

- Hearing or vision impairments
- Physical disabilities
- Medical conditions
- Sensory sensitivities such as sensitivity to noise, light, touch, or movement

Teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), alongside subject leaders and the SENDCo, use their experience and expertise to identify specific needs and to implement appropriate actions and reasonable adjustments to move the child forward.

3) <u>Support for Pupils Without SEND Who May Need Additional Support:</u>

Some children may need additional support at certain times in their school life, even though they do not have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). This may be due to factors such as low prior attainment, gaps in learning, changes in circumstances, attendance issues, or temporary barriers to learning. We are committed to supporting all children to make progress and achieve their best. Teachers use regular assessment, observation, and professional judgement to identify children who may benefit from additional support. This includes reviewing classroom work, progress over time, and information from parents, carers, and the child themselves. Support for all children is planned as part of high-quality teaching and learning and may include targeted small-group work, short-term interventions to boost skills such as reading, writing or maths, adapted learning activities, pre-teaching or consolidation of key concepts, additional adult support in class where appropriate, and support with organisation or learning behaviours.

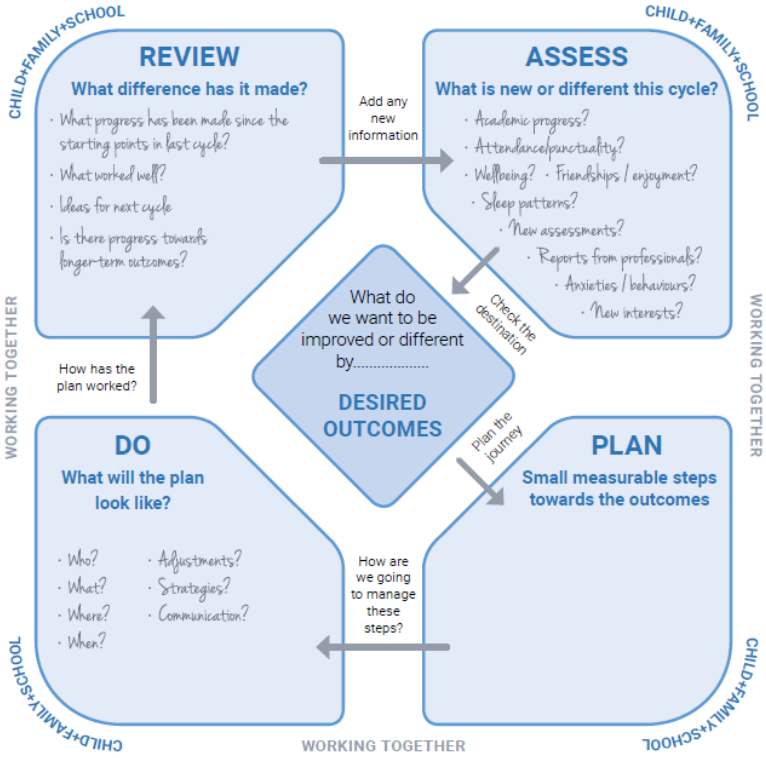
The progress of pupils receiving additional support is closely monitored by class teachers and senior leaders. Support is reviewed regularly and adjusted as needed. Children may catch up quickly with appropriate intervention and no longer need additional support.

We work in partnership with parents and carers to support children's learning. This includes sharing information about progress, strategies used in school, and ways families can support learning at home.

If a child continues to experience difficulties despite targeted support, we may consider whether there is an underlying special educational need. The class teacher would then discuss this child with the SENDCo who will carry out an observation of the child and gather further information using appropriate checklists, screeners or assessments to further identify and understand their needs. This would always be discussed with parents or carers and, where appropriate, further advice or assessment may be sought.

4) <u>Support for children with Special Educational Needs:</u>

The Graduated Approach-
Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle



Following this period of information gathering, a meeting will be arranged with parents, the class teacher and the SENDCo to discuss any findings, concerns and the support that will be put in place to support the child to make progress. If appropriate, a graduated approach 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' (APDR) cycle will be discussed with parents/carers and an Individual Learning Plan put in place to identify further quality-first teaching methods, strategies and resources which will be used to support the child.

3-4 SMART targets will be set that both school and parents agree to work towards to support the child to make progress. SMART targets should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely.

At this stage, the child will also be added to the school SEND register where they are identified as receiving 'SEND support'.

Individual Learning Plans are reviewed termly through meetings between the class teacher and parents/carers and new targets will be set.

Support and Provision

The first step to supporting a child who has or may have SEND, is always through the provision of effective high-quality teaching. Support may include adaptations to the learning environment or seating plan, additional resources and scaffolds, or adult support to enable the child to access the whole-class learning opportunities. This is known as universal provision. Universal provision is based on inclusive approaches to teaching and learning which benefit all children but are essential for those with SEND

High quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support for all children but for some children, further support might be needed to ensure the child's progress and enable them to work at age-related expectations. This will take the form of carefully selected, targeted support and interventions, identified through the assessment process. These will have a specific set of desired outcomes and children will access the targeted support or intervention alongside high quality classroom teaching.

Specialist support and provision may be implemented for a very small number of children where, following a reasonable period of universal and targeted provision, this is not having the desired impact and progress is not being made. Specialist support and provision is highly individualised and based on specific assessments. It is likely to involve external professionals such as speech and language therapists or advisory teachers to provide specialist support for the child's specific needs.

All SEND provision is put in place with regard to Hertfordshire's Ordinarily Available Provision guidance.

Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

The majority of children with special educational needs can be effectively supported and provided for through school SEND support. But for a small number of children, it may become evident that SEND support is not sufficient and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is needed in order to meet the needs of the child.

An EHCP is a statutory assessment which builds on the co-ordinated work that is already happening between families, schools and other health and social care services involved with the child- it should not be the first step in the process of meeting the needs of the child and parents and teachers are encouraged to speak to their child's class teacher and the SENDCo if they think that a child may benefit from an EHCP.

Parents of children with an EHCP will be invited to an annual review meeting involving all professionals who support their child. In this meeting, progress will be discussed and targets will be reviewed. Children with an EHCP will also have an Individual Learning Plan which breaks down the annual EHCP targets into achievable termly goals.

Our approach to teaching pupils with SEND

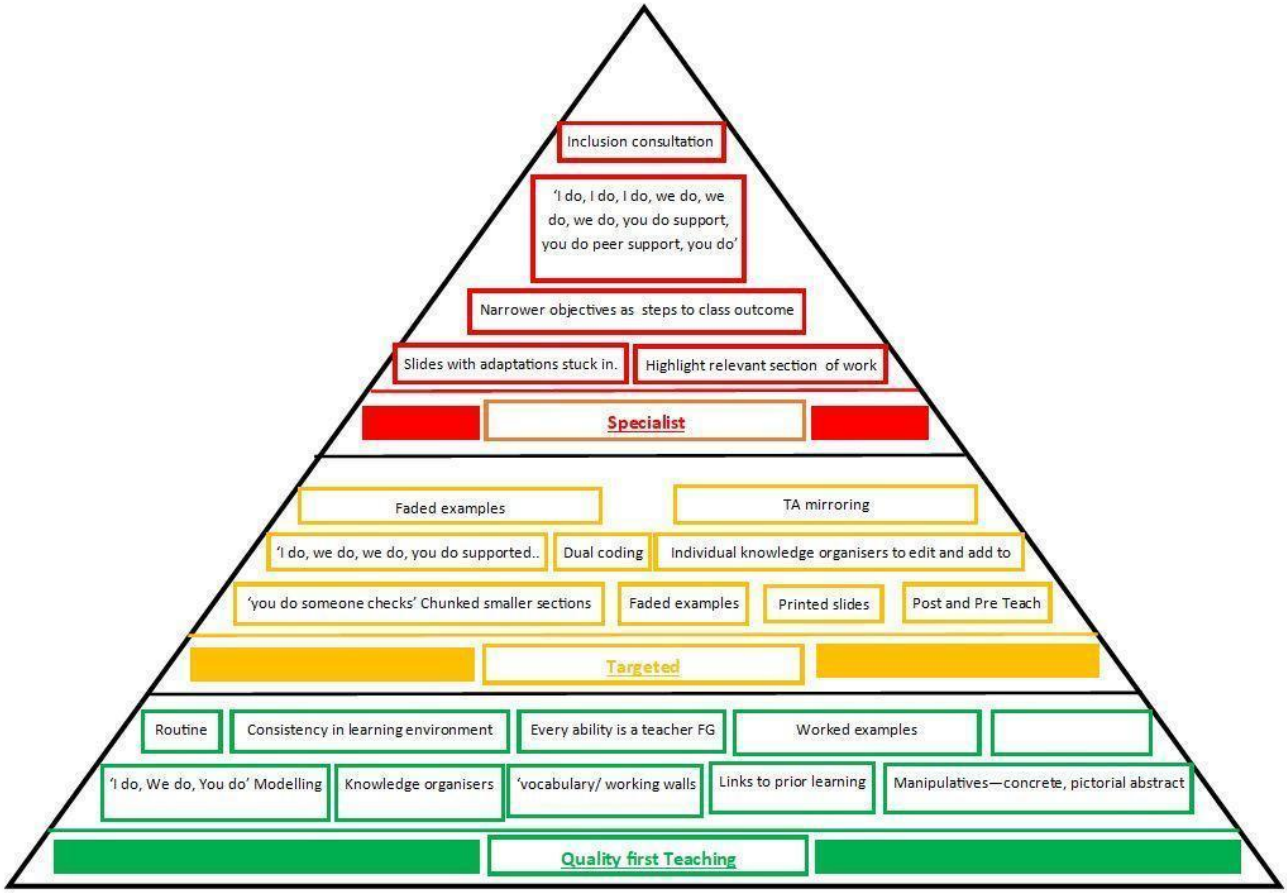
All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is scaffolded to enable pupils to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Teachers use a range of strategies to meet pupil's special educational needs and are supported by the SENDCo where further strategies and resources are required. Lessons have clear learning objectives and success criteria, work is scaffolded according to the needs of the class and ongoing assessment is used to inform the next stage of learning.

We support pupils in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw pupils from the classroom situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the pupils to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom as mentioned above.

The triangle below displays the scaffolds used by staff to support children through quality first teaching, targeted or specialist levels of provision:



5) Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for children with SEND is the responsibility of all school staff. It is the class teacher's responsibility to provide for pupils with SEND in their class, and to be aware of how these needs may present in different learning situations.

All staff in the school are responsible for helping to meet an individual's special educational needs and for following the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision to meet those needs as part of a graduated approach.

The Board of Trustees, in co-operation with the Headteacher, has a legal responsibility for determining the policy and provision for pupils with SEND. It maintains a general overview and has appointed a representative trustee (the SENDTrustee), who has a particular focus on this aspect of the school. Our School SEND Trustee is Mrs Claire Coe.

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- The management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for pupils with SEND
- Keeping the Board of Trustees informed about SEND issues, alongside the SENDCo
- Working closely with the SENDCo within school
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the need to identify and make suitable provision for pupils with SEND
- Managing the SEND budget, with reference to the SENDCo and ensuring the trustees are kept informed of this

- Ensuring that the implementation of this policy is monitored and reported to Trustees

The Board of Trustees will ensure that:

- SEND provision is an integral part of the School Improvement Plan
- All necessary provision is made for any pupil with SEND
- Pupils with SEND join in the school activities alongside other pupils, as far as is reasonably practical and compatible with their needs and the efficient education of other pupils
- Have regard to the requirements of the SEND Code of Practice 0-25, 2015
- Parents are notified if the school decides to make special educational provision for their child
- They are fully informed about SEND issues, so that they can play a major part in school self-review
- They set up appropriate staffing and funding arrangements, and oversee the school's work for pupils with SEND
- The quality of SEND provision is regularly monitored through school visits, discussion with the SENDCo and Headteacher and feedback from children and parents
- They, and the school as a whole, are involved in the development and monitoring of this policy

The Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENDCo) is responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy within the school
- Ensuring that an agreed, consistent approach is adopted by all members of staff
- Monitoring and supporting identification and progress of children with SEND
- Ensuring all staff in the school are made aware of any necessary information relating to the supervision of pupils and supporting them in relation to behaviour management
- Carrying out or organising assessments and observations of pupils
- Maintaining the school's SEND Register and records
- Ensuring effective liaison with parents of pupils with SEND takes place, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are fully involved in the process
- Identifying professional development needs of all staff and organising/leading appropriate INSET
- Liaising with outside agencies, arranging and attending meetings, and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers, pupils and parents
- Completing requests for Education, Health and Care Plan assessments, outside agency support or external funding
- Keeping informed of any new documentation and informing staff
- Supporting class teachers in provision mapping and writing of Individual Learning Plans, including setting of SMART targets where relevant
- Supporting good practice in the classroom, in using a range of teaching and learning styles
- Advising on appropriate resources and materials for use with pupils with SEND and on the effective use of personnel in the classroom
- Management and organisation of LSAs across the school, working with pupils with SEND
- Ensuring Individual Learning Plans and EHCP targets are reflected in teachers' daily/weekly planning
- Organising resources available to support learning, including ICT

Class Teachers are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with pupil's records and information regarding their special educational needs
- Early identification of pupils with SEND

- Including pupils with SEND in the classroom and all school activities, wherever possible
- Providing an appropriately differentiated curriculum, drawing on support from the SENDCo for appropriate strategies to support inclusion
- Monitoring SEND pupils and identifying/ tracking their progress towards reaching their full potential in terms of learning and social and emotional development
- Writing of SMART Individual Learning Plan targets/plans and provision mapping, with support from SENDCo
- Ensuring Individual Learning Plans /EHCPs are reflected in daily/weekly planning
- Ensuring provision detailed in EHCP is implemented, with support from SENDCo
- Giving feedback to parents of pupils with SEND
- Making themselves aware of this policy and procedures for identification, monitoring and supporting pupils with SEND
- Keeping the SENDCo informed of updates for pupils with SEND
- Providing LSAs with clear and specific guidance for working with pupils with SEND
- Using a range of teaching and learning styles in the classroom to best support the needs of the children
- Using appropriate resources and materials for pupils

Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) should:

- Be fully aware of this policy and the procedure for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEND,
- Follow teacher guidance, support children's needs in and out of the classroom,
- Use the school's procedures for giving feedback to teachers about pupils' responses to tasks and strategies.

6) Effective communication and collaboration

Working with Parents/carers

We work closely with parents/carers and welcome opportunities to discuss the provision in place or any concerns that they may have.

As well as informal meetings, we also hold Parent Consultations or Focussed Observations in the autumn and spring terms and provide an end of year report in the summer term. Children with SEND also have an additional Individual Learning Plan meeting or extended Parent Consultation each term to review their current progress and collaboratively plan provision to move the child forward. Children with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) will also have an Annual Review which involves the SENDCo, teachers, parents/carers and outside professionals working together to review progress and provision.

Where it is felt appropriate to refer a child to an external professional for further support, this will be discussed with parents and carried out with their consent. Parents/carers will be informed of any discussions and provision agreed with external professionals.

Parents/carers are also invited to share their views and ideas to develop our provision further.

Pupil's views

We have a number of pupil voice groups in which children can give their views and feedback on various aspects of the school community. These groups have representatives from different vulnerable groups, including children with SEND.

External professionals and specialists

Applecroft School works closely with a range of external agencies and specialist advisory staff to ensure that we are providing the best possible opportunities and educational experiences for our pupils. Dependent on the needs, we are able to access the following services to be delivered within school:

- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language therapists
- Team for Hearing Impaired
- Team for Visually Impaired
- Speech, Language, Communication and Autism Advisory Team
- School Nursing Team
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Step 2
- Children's Services
- Children's Centre
- School Family Worker
- Art Therapy
- Music Therapy
- The Butterfly Room Therapeutic Service
- Virtual School for Children Looked After

Support from external agencies can be discussed with the SENDCo, who can, if appropriate, talk to the relevant agency and make a referral. These discussions can come from teachers, parents/carers and children, and a referral can be made with everyone's consent.

When a number of agencies become involved with a child or family a 'Families First Assessment' (FFA) might take place. The purpose of this is to ensure that different agencies all work together in an effective and coordinated way to best support the child and family.

For further support for parents/carers of children and young people with SEND, including SEND Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS), please follow this link: Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer

7) Monitoring and evaluating

The effectiveness of this policy and the quality of SEND provision are monitored and evaluated through:

- Regular monitoring of children's progress data, including analysis of outcomes for children with SEND
- Learning walks, book scrutiny, and lesson observations conducted by the Senior Leadership Team.
- Feedback from Annual Reviews and termly SEND review meetings

- Feedback from pupils, parents/carers, and staff, both formal and informal.

Findings inform the School Improvement Plan, which includes specific SEND and Inclusion targets.

8) Admissions for pupils with SEND

The protocol for admission of children with identified SEND needs is the same as for all children and can be found in our school's admissions policy.

Admission for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to Hertfordshire schools is managed by the SEND team, not through the standard admissions process. Parents request schools during the 16–20 week EHCP assessment/review period, with final school placement named in Section I of the plan by the Local Authority, prioritizing parental preference

9) Transition

Our school works closely with all settings at the time of transition. At all stages, communication and information sharing is seen as crucial to ensure a smooth transition.

We arrange Home Visits for all children prior to joining our school Nursery or Reception Class and visits are made by key staff to other settings in the Early Years as appropriate. We hold Nursery and Reception Induction days to meet the EYFS staff and visit the setting.

There are internal transition meetings between each year group at the end of each academic year.

We work closely with local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for our Year 6 pupils in the summer term. This includes the children visiting their new secondary school as well as visits from Year 7 staff. For children who may find transition to secondary school difficult, additional transition visits can be arranged and support can be offered to individual and small groups of children through the local DSPL (Delivering Special Provision Locally) outreach support to prepare children for this.

Information and documentation, such as Individual Learning Plans, Risk Management Plans etc. about individual children's SEND needs and support is provided to new class teachers/secondary schools to give them the best overview of the child. For some children with SEND, transition books are made to help them to prepare for the changes ahead.

10) Training and expertise of staff

We value training and development opportunities for all staff to continue to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can best support children with SEND.

The SENDCo holds the National Award for SEND Co-ordination (Achieved in November 2016). She continually updates her training and knowledge by attending relevant courses and feeds back to staff as necessary. The SENDCo also supports staff to most effectively plan for and teach children with SEND.

Staff attend relevant courses and training provided by Hertfordshire County Council and the local district when necessary as well as receiving relevant 'in house' training in a variety of areas. Individual staff are trained to teach different interventions to support specific children for example, phonics and spelling interventions, SMART Moves, SCERTS or Drawing and Talking therapy. Other training is delivered to support all staff to identify and support children with different aspects of SEND.

11)Safeguarding, including anti-bullying and online safety

We recognise that children with SEND can be particularly vulnerable and can face additional safeguarding challenges. We work closely at Applecroft to promote and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils. For more information, please see our Safeguarding policy which you will find on the school website.

12)Funding and Resources

The school budget includes a notional SEND budget which is allocated by the Headteacher, SENDCo and trustees according to need.
Additional funding can be applied for by the school to support individual children with exceptional needs and some (but not all) children with an EHC plan are assigned additional funding to help to meet their needs.

We also have funding targeted at specific groups such as Pupil Premium funding which allows staff to work specifically with these children to monitor and support their progress.

13) SEND Information Report

Our school SEND Information Report has been written with guidance from the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy. The SEND Information Report has been written collaboratively with staff, governors and parents to form part of the Hertfordshire Local Offer and provides information about the help, support and services which are available to meet the needs of pupils at Applecroft School with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and to their families. This can be found on the school website.

14) Complaints process

If a parent is unhappy with the SEND provision, they should first discuss this with the class teacher, who if appropriate will also speak to the SENDCo. If the query is not satisfactorily resolved by the class teacher and SENDCo, parents should then contact the Headteacher, Mrs Lisa Withe. Our complaints policy can be found on the school website.

15) Links to other school policies

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Accessibility Plan
- Administering Medicines Policy,
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy,

- Child Protection Policy,
- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Policy,
- Equality and Diversity Policy,
- Safeguarding Policy,
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy