Special Education Needs and Disabilities Policy 2026 – 2027

POLICY INFORMATION

Named personnel with designated responsibility for all matters associated with special educational needs and disabilities:

Date of last review:	Sept 2026	Author:	Molly Devlin Director of Early Years
Date of next review:	Sept 2027	Owner:	Molly Devlin Director of Early Years
Type of policy:	☐ Network-wide ☒ Set for nursery ☒ Tailored by nursery	Approval:	Board
Nursery:	Ark Start John Archer Ark Start Oval Ark Start Globe Ark Start St Clement Ark Start Brunel Ark Start John Keats	Key Contact Name:	Molly Devlin Director of Early Years
Key Contact Email:	molly.devlin@arkstart.org.uk	Key Contact Phone:	020 3116 6338
Nursery SENco	Nursery Manager	Contact details:	info@arkstart.org.uk
Member of staff responsible for children with medical needs	Molly Devlin	Contact details:	molly.devlin@arkstart.org.uk
Member of staff responsible for managing PPG/LAC funding	Molly Devlin	Contact details:	molly.devlin@arkstart.org.uk
Finance Director	Leila Tipping	Contact details:	leila.tipping@arkonline.org

Policy review dates (frequency of review: annual)

Review Date	Changes Made	By whom
Sep 2014	Policy created	Ark Central
Sep 2016	Policy reviewed	Stephanie Bryan
Sep 2017	Policy reviewed	Carly Biggam
Sep 2020	Policy reviewed	Zara Simpson
Sep 2021	Policy reviewed	Lydia Cuddy-Gibbs
Sep 2022	Policy reviewed	Molly Devlin
Sep 2023	Policy reviewed	Molly Devlin
Sep 2024	Policy reviewed	Molly Devlin
Sep 2025	Policy reviewed	Molly Devlin
Sep 2026	Policy reviewed	Molly Devlin

Compliance

This policy complies with all statutory requirements, especially those relating to the legislation contained in the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25, September 2014.

This policy was created by the Nursery SENDCo in collaboration with the Ark Start Leadership Team and Ark Central, taking into account the views of pupils, parents and relevant other stakeholders.

Roles and Responsibilities

The SENCO

The SENCO role is performed by the Manager of the Nursery, who has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEN and disabilities policy and co-ordinating provision made for students with SEN and disabilities.

The SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for students with SEN and disabilities, and works closely with students, parents and other professionals to ensure students with SEN and disabilities receive appropriate support.

The SENCO plays an important role with the area manager in determining the strategic development of the SEN and disabilities policy and provision within the Nursery in order to raise the achievements of students with SEN and disabilities.

In compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the SENCo is also responsible for the following:

In relation to each of the registered pupils who the SENCO considers may have special educational needs, informing a parent / carer of the pupil that this may be the case as soon as is reasonably practicable.

In relation to each of the registered pupils who have special educational needs:

- Identifying the children's special educational needs, and co-ordinating the making of special educational provision which meets those needs
- Monitoring the effectiveness of any special educational provision made
- Securing relevant services for the pupil where necessary
- Ensuring the records of the pupil's special educational needs and the special educational provision made are maintained and kept up to date
- Liaising with and providing information to a parent / carer of the pupil on a regular basis about that pupil's special educational needs and the special educational provision made
- Endeavouring to ensure that, where a pupil transfers to another Nursery or school, a full handover takes place
- Promoting the pupil's inclusion in the Nursery community and access to the Nursery's curriculum, facilities and extra-curricular activities
- Selecting, supervising and training members of staff who work with pupils with special educational needs
- Advising staff at the Nursery about differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils with special educational needs
- Contributing to in-service training for staff at the Nursery to assist them to carry out necessary tasks to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs
- Preparing and reviewing the information required by law to be published in relation to special educational needs provision

The Director of Early Years

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the strategic planning and day-to-day delivery of SEND provision.

Our Vision, Values & Aims

Our vision for all pupils, including those who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is that they will develop the necessary skills, knowledge and attributes to be able to lead happy and successful lives.

Ark Start is a network of nurseries operating independent of but in partnership with Ark Schools, a multi-academy trust. Our ambition is to provide accessible high-quality early education and care to all children so that they are ready for school and beyond. We place children at the heart of our work and aim to work closely with their families to ensure that every child thrives. We believe it takes a village to raise each child and aim to create a place where communities can come together to support one another. Our core values permeate all that we do and the relationships we make. Our values are:

- Aim High
- Be Brave
- Be Kind
- Keep Learning

In achieving our aims, we will:

- work side-by-side with teaching staff, supporting them with training and development so that they can deliver well differentiated activities and lessons with the needs of those pupils who have SEN and disabilities in mind
- set exceptionally high expectations for all our pupils and do whatever it takes to meet them. Our aspirations are no lower for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- teach, recognise and reinforce good behaviour
- organise our Nursery so that every child knows, and is known well by, every adult in the Nursery
- prioritise depth and understanding in English and mathematics, giving our pupils with SEN and disabilities the best chance of success

Identifying Special Educational Needs

Early identification of pupils' needs is the key to unlocking the potential of pupils who may have special educational needs. We adopt a graduated approach to ensure that pupils who do not develop age appropriate knowledge and skills, or who fall behind their peers are identified as early as possible.

The attainment of all pupils is assessed upon entry to the Nursery, as part of the Early Years Foundation Framework. This is in order to:

- form the baseline for setting individual age-related targets. Progress towards these targets is reviewed at data entry points at least three times per year to ensure that pupils who fall behind are identified as early as possible.
- identify pupils whose development is significantly behind that of their peers. Such pupils are prioritised for targeted and/or specialist assessment and/or intervention as set out in section 5 below. Each intervention is reviewed frequently, based on progress against intervention-specific measures.

Where concerns about a student's learning or development arises as result of our data analysis, we start the identification process by talking to the pupil and a parent / carer. Where learning needs appear complex, we may also seek input from specialists in partnership with the local authority.

In our attempts to understand the learning needs of pupils, we apply the four broad categories of need as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2014):

- Communication and interaction needs refer to those children who experience difficulty with speech, language and communication
- Cognition and learning needs refer to those children who learn at a slower pace than their peers, or who have difficulties acquiring skills in a specific area such as literacy. This includes children with moderate learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties, requiring support in all areas of the curriculum and participation in school life in general
- Social, emotional and mental health needs, as manifested in different ways, such as students becoming withdrawn or displaying challenging behaviour such as being disruptive or self-harming. Children who have difficulty paying attention or forming attachments with adults also fall into this category.
- Sensory and / or physical needs refer to those children who require special educational provision because they have a disability that prevents them from accessing the educational facilities that are generally available

A Graduated Approach to SEN Support

At Ark Start, we have a three-tiered, graduated approach to supporting students' learning needs. The graduated approach at each tier involves:

- Assessing the pupil's needs by considering all the information gathered from within the Nursery about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress and parent and pupil views.
- Planning the most effective and appropriate short-term intervention, based on evidence of what works
- Providing this intervention and training staff to deliver it to a high standard as well as clear information for parents / carers
- Reviewing the impact on the pupil's progress towards individual learning outcomes at shorter intervals, depending on the type of intervention

Recording SEN and Disabilities

We are required by law to keep a record of those pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs and disabilities, and the provision we make for such pupils.

If/when the pupil has caught up with their peers and therefore no longer requires the additional provision or support, in consultation with parents the entry will be deleted from the SEND register and provision will be ended in the provision map.

Support for Families

We provide support to parents / carers of pupils with SEN and/or disabilities through regular contact, information sharing and termly progress reports.

Specific support is provided at key transition points. At the end of Nursery parents/carers may talk to the SENCo about transition plans for starting Reception/School.

Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions

We recognise that children at nursery with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to the provision. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the Nursery will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some pupils with medical conditions may also have special educational needs and where this is the case the Nursery will comply with the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (2014).

Storing & Managing Information

All documents and information are stored in compliance with guidance presented in the Data Protection Policy.

Dealing with Complaints

Our named person for all matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities is our SENCo.

If a parent wishes to make a formal complaint, they should follow the complaints policy.

Equality Impact Statement

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review we shall assess and consult relevant stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the Equality Act (2010). This will include but not necessarily be limited to: race; gender; sexual orientation; disability; ethnicity; religion; cultural beliefs and pregnancy/maternity. We will use an appropriate Equality Impact Assessment to monitor the impact of all our policies and the policy may be amended as a result of this assessment.