



Special Educational Needs Information Report & Policy
2025-26

Name of School	Cotton End Forest School
Type of setting	Mainstream Primary School
Name of SENCO	Mrs Diane Catchpole
Qualification	National Award for Special Needs Co-ordinators.
Position in school	Diane Catchpole – Assistant Headteacher, SENDCo, Mental Health and Well-being Lead.
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SEND Governor	Mrs Angela Toms atoms@cottonendforestschool.co.uk
Website	www.cottonendforestschool.co.uk
Link to SEND Information Report/Policy	www.cottonendforestschool.co.uk about us
Link to SEND page of schools website	www.cottonendforestschool.co.uk policies section

Legislative Compliance

This policy complies with the guidance given in **Statutory Instrument: Special Educational Needs (Information) Regulations (Clause 65)**. It has been written as guidance for staff, parents or carers and children with reference to the following guidance and documents.

SEN Code of Practice (which takes account of the SEN provisions of the SEN and Disability Act 2001) September 2014

Ofsted Section 5 Inspection Framework September 2021

Ofsted SEN Review 2010 “A Statement is not enough”

Equality Act 2010

Children and Families Act 2014

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools November 2018

School Mission Statement and Values:

Cotton End Forest School is a place where everyone is cared for as an individual, their views and heritage respected and where children are at the centre of all we do. We allow each individual to flourish through a happy, safe and stimulating environment where everyone can meet their personal goals and full potential: physically, socially, intellectually, emotionally, morally and spiritually. Through a positive forest school ethos, we listen, engage and nurture a can-do attitude in order to prepare all learners for their future lives, enabling enjoyable learning within the context of a rapidly changing society.

Every teacher at Cotton End Forest school is a teacher of every child in their class, including those with SEND. Their ultimate goal is for every member of their class to achieve their best.

In line with the SEN Code of Practice (2014), all stakeholders have been involved in the development of this policy, including governors, parents/ carers and pupils.

Our SEND policies reflect the values embedded across the school. These are supported by our behaviour, attendance, administration of medicines, disability and inclusion policies.

Aim:

At Cotton End Forest School, the emphasis is on a whole school approach. All teachers accept responsibility for providing children with challenging learning goals in a broad knowledge based, curriculum. We believe in providing high expectations for all learners regardless of ability, and use an adaptive teaching approach to develop the educational, social, emotional, cultural and spiritual aspects of the curriculum.

Objectives:

- ❖ To provide learning opportunities for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ❖ To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014
- ❖ To operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ❖ To provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) to oversee the day to day operation of the schools SEN policy.
- ❖ To provide support and advice to all staff working with Special educational needs pupils.
- ❖ To work in partnership with the child, parent/carers, all staff, governors and outside agencies.
- ❖ Enhance self-esteem by setting appropriate and challenging targets and by celebrating success.
- ❖ Make adaptations to the curriculum and the learning environment to enable 'all' children to learn.
- ❖ Make full use of all the support agencies that have been made available through the LA.

Principles:

The principles which underpin the procedures throughout the process are:

- the early identification of the child's special needs.

- evidence of barriers to learning.
- provision that matches the child's needs.
- a personal plan to meet the child's needs.
- regular recording of a child's special educational needs, the action taken and the outcomes including a review of the plan which evaluates its success.
- the involvement of parents.
- the involvement of the child.

Identifying Special Educational Needs:

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or a disability which calls for additional educational provision to be made for them. There are 4 broad categories of Need:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs

At Cotton End Forest School, we work hard to ensure that we can provide support across these four areas.

Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- a) Have a significant difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities, generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
- c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) or would, if special educational provision was not made for them.

Some children may not be considered to have SEN but may not be making good progress or attainment. This may be due to:

- Disability
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL- Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked After Child
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

Early identification is key to ensuring that a pupil can be successful in their learning journey. The earlier action is taken, the more responsive the child is likely to be. All children are carefully tracked and their progress monitored half termly. This is carried out through ongoing teacher assessment and end of unit

assessments. Class teachers adapt tasks and make reasonable adjustments, to include all pupils and any concerns about progress or development are raised at pupil progress meetings with SLT including the SENCo. If a difficulty proves transient the child will subsequently be able to learn and progress normally. If the child's difficulties prove less responsive to provision made by the school, then an early start can be made in considering the additional provision that may be needed to support the child's progress. Parents and carers are kept informed throughout this process by means of informal discussions, consultations, scheduled meetings with staff and/or other professionals.

We value the way in which children are unique, celebrating diversity and the importance of each person. We encourage our pupils to celebrate differences and learn from each other. We will respect and not discriminate against others due to their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender or sexual orientation (protected characteristics). We will provide a happy, caring, supportive and positive learning community where each child, including those with SEND can develop and extend their potential and achieve success. It is our intention that all children, including those with SEND are given early intervention and targeted support to overcome barriers and embed skills, to develop at their own pace and learn in a style that suits them.

A Graduated Approach to SEN Support:

All class teachers at Cotton End Forest school understand that they are accountable for all children in their class. Every teacher is a teacher for every child in their class, including those with SEN. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of children in their class, including overseeing support from teaching assistants. This is done by:

High Quality Teaching:

- a) Any pupils who are falling outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators will be monitored.
- b) Once a pupil has been identified as *possibly* having SEN they will be closely monitored. The class teacher will make adaptations to work and the classroom environment to support the child's learning needs. At least three strategies will be tried and recorded.
- c) The SENCo will be consulted as needed for support and advice and may wish to observe the pupil in class to ensure that they are receiving high quality teaching.
- d) Through (b) and (c) it can be determined which level of provision the child will need going forward. A child may receive additional intervention or support to close the gap between themselves and peers. All interventions are closely monitored by the SENCo and children's progress is tracked carefully to ensure progression. If progression is slow, the intervention may be adapted or stopped and another considered in its place.
- e) Parents will be informed fully of every stage of their child's development. They are encouraged to share information and knowledge with the school. Class teachers meet with parents to discuss their child's progress and monitor provision.

ASSESS –PLAN –DO –REVIEW:

•The Code of Practice describes The Graduated Approach as a “cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with the growing understanding of pupils' needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes”

SEND Flow Chart

Step 1 – Initial Concern

Parents and/or teachers raise concerns about a child. Concerns are discussed between parents or carers and the class teacher. Complete a concern sheet and pass to the SENDCo, to make her aware of these early concerns.



Step 2 – Teacher Adapts

The class teacher adapts work and/or re-organises classroom support to help the child make better progress.
At least 3 strategies should be tried and recorded.



(If the plan works and the child's needs are met they will be removed from the SEND register but continued to be monitored by their class teacher)

Step 3 – Action Plan

Class teacher meets with the SENDCo to discuss the child. Their needs are assessed in detail and an individual needs action plan (INAP) is developed by the class teacher. This is shared with the parents and checked by the SENDCo. School resources and/or expertise may be assigned to deliver the INAP and the plan is reviewed termly.
The child is now on the SEND register at SEN support level.



(After at least 2 reviewed plans)

Step 4 – Early Help Assessment

The SENDCo invites parents to a meeting and with the help of the class teacher and teaching assistant they complete an EHA (Early Help Assessment). We need lots of information from parents at this stage to help us to fully understand the child. The information we collect, helps us to plan very closely to meet the needs of children. EHA are sent into Early Help who involve outside agencies to support the child and family. Plans made will be reviewed through TAF (Team around Family) meetings with school, parents and outside agencies and we will all decide what to do next.



Step 5 – Education and Health Care Plan

If it has been agreed by everyone at step 4, we will apply for an EHCP (Education and Health Care Plan) from Bedford Borough Council. This replaces the old 'Statement of Special Educational Needs' and is where the Borough assesses a child's needs and gives the school extra resources to help us to support that child's learning and development. This process takes around 20 weeks from start to finish.

Managing Pupils needs on the SEND register:

When we identify that a pupil has special educational needs and this has been discussed with parents, we place them on the Special Educational Needs Register. Children will be recorded under the category as SEN support, unless they have an EHCP, and will also show the need description eg: Speech, Language and Communication Need, ADHD, ASD etc.

All children in school have educational targets set at the start of the academic year. If the class teacher and SENDCo feel that a child needs targets in addition to their targets already in school which address their specific Special Educational Needs then they may be given an individual needs action plan (INAP).

The targets on the Individual Needs Action plan are based on collaboration between all the parties involved i.e. the child, parent, SENCo, Teacher and Teaching Assistant. Staff work hard to ensure that the targets are:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easureable
- **A**chievable
- **R**elevant
- **T**ime limited

Teachers review targets on the individual needs action plans every 6 weeks. Teachers are given one staff meeting every half term to review and update INAPs before sharing them with parents. It is the teachers' responsibility to keep these records up to date and these are monitored by the SENCo.

Adequate progress can be defined in a number of ways ie:-

- ❖ closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- ❖ prevents the attainment gap growing wider
- ❖ is similar to that of peers starting from the same attainment baseline, but less than that of the majority of peers
- ❖ matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress
- ❖ ensures access to the full curriculum
- ❖ demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- ❖ demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour

If a child's progress is inadequate the class teacher will provide interventions that are **additional to** or **different from** those provided as part of the usual differentiated curriculum offer and strategies.

If a child is still not making adequate progress, the SENCo may contact external agencies to offer further support. Parents will be kept informed at all times.

The Retreat

What is the Cotton End forest School Retreat?

The Retreat is a calm, distraction free and therapeutic learning space, offering flexible and targeted support for our most vulnerable children with complex needs, as part of their mainstream learning provision. The Retreat is a dedicated and purposely resourced room, with trained staff who support the class teachers to provide purposeful, personalised learning and wellbeing opportunities. The planning for curriculum activities that take place in the Retreat is undertaken by the class teacher of each child with support from curriculum leads, the SENCo and advising professionals. The SENCo oversees the Retreat and liaises with each class teacher to plan individual timetables for those children who require some of their learning time to take place in the Retreat. In this way, each child is able to access the classroom learning, working alongside and with their peers when they are able, and make use of the Retreat when needed. The physical environment of the Retreat is calm and organised. There are individual workstations that provide a distraction-free environment, small group work areas and a computer workstation with a colourful semantic keyboard. Importantly there are zoned wellbeing areas such as tuff trays with curriculum related sensory resources to explore, a reading nook, and sensory resources for physical sensory release such as trampette, wobble boards and weighted blankets to provide opportunities for sensory circuits and sensory play. The Retreat also offers attention autism groups sessions led by experienced staff and zones of regulation group sessions to support emotional regulation.

These resources all serve to help improve the self-regulation of children with more complex needs through movement and 'brain breaks'. This blended offer enhances the child's experience at school, enabling Cotton End Forest School to meet the specific wellbeing and learning needs of our children with SEND. The Retreat is an integrated part of school life and Cotton End's commitment to meeting the individual needs of each child.

Ongoing careful assessment, planning and review takes place by listening to views of the child, consulting with parents/carers and advising professionals, observing behaviours and attainment, working flexibly and adapting practice accordingly.

Safeguarding Children with SEND.

Cotton End Forest School are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its children/young people. We believe that:

- all children/young people have an equal right to be protected from harm.
- children/young people need support which matches their individual needs, including those who may have experienced abuse.
- all children/young people have the right to speak freely and voice their values and beliefs.
- all children/young people must be encouraged to respect each other's values and support each other.

- all children/young people have the right to be supported to meet their emotional, and social needs as well as their educational needs.
- schools can and do contribute to the prevention of abuse, victimisation, bullying, exploitation, extreme behaviours, discriminatory views and risk-taking behaviours (behaviours which may be perceived to be 'risky')
- all staff, volunteers and visitors have an important role to play in safeguarding children/young people and protecting them from abuse.

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline, inside and outside of their home. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration
- these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children
- the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs, and
- communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- cognitive understanding – being unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in school.

Staff members are aware of these vulnerabilities, are up to date with safeguarding training and will remain professionally curious to look out for any safeguarding concerns including contextual safeguarding information and report these to the designated safeguarding lead or deputies, including the SENCo. The school has appropriate digital filters in place. Any safeguarding concern will be logged by the staff member on CPOMS which is the school's reporting tool. Action (with the reasons for those actions as appropriate) will be taken in line with the school's safeguarding policy. This may lead to the designated safeguarding lead or her deputies seeking support from Bedford Borough's Early Help Service or Social Care. Staff will always act promptly and in the best interests of the child. There are circumstances when it may be necessary for staff to use reasonable force to safeguard a child. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. 'Reasonable' force means 'using no more force than is needed'. The need for reasonable force is outlined in KCSIE, September 2024. Any actions taken by staff will be in the best interests of the child and in line with the school's behaviour policy and physical intervention policy. Key staff who support children who present with challenging behaviour will receive necessary training such as Team Teach, so that an emphasis can be placed on preventative and de-escalation strategies. Risk Assessments and behaviour plans will be completed as appropriate, in collaboration with advising professionals, parents and carers. Every effort will be made to plan support that will prevent or de-escalate a situation and retain the dignity for that child. In any such instance, an account will be written on CPOMS and parents/ carers will be informed. Staff will have an opportunity to review the incident with a member of the senior leadership team.

Supporting Pupils and Families:

We have an open-door policy at Cotton End with the Head-teacher, staff and SENCo meeting and greeting parents on a daily basis. Any concerns raised about a child are shared with parents as soon as possible. Parents and teachers meet termly with timetabled consultations. Any action plans are discussed and agreed with parents before involvement of any external agencies. Individual targets are shared with parents termly. Involving pupils in their learning is a vital part of development and progress. Pupil's self-esteem and well-being is monitored termly using Leuven's Scales. Any child with an Educational and Health Care Plan will be involved in the review and implementation of the plan throughout.

Supporting Pupils at school with Medical conditions:

The school database is updated as and when information comes into school. Any major changes are passed on to the teacher straight away. Updated class medical information is passed on to the teacher every term and kept in the class Individual Needs file.

However, a medical diagnosis or a disability does not necessarily imply SEN. It is the child's educational needs rather than a medical diagnosis that must be considered. However medical conditions may have a significant impact on a child's experiences and the way they function in school and if not properly managed could hinder their access to education. Therefore, consultation and open discussion between the child's parents, the school, the school doctor or the child's GP and any specialist services providing treatment for the child will be essential to ensure that the child makes maximum progress.

Monitoring and Evaluating of SEND:

Cotton End Forest School promotes a fully inclusive environment where all children feel safe and valued. We actively seek to identify barriers to learning and endeavour to remove these barriers enabling children to achieve their full potential. We have high aspirations and expectations of all children including those with SEND. Children are treated as individuals and their needs addressed as such. We adapt teaching through individualised interventions, accommodating all Special Education Needs within a mainstream setting.

Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and tracked through the use of individual needs action plans (INAPs), individual needs meetings, pupil progress meetings and target tracker. INAP targets are shared with parents and reviewed every half term. Parents have the opportunity to attend parent consultations in October and March to discuss their child's progress and attainment. Teachers meet with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and SENCo termly to discuss progress of children and where children are not making the required progress, interventions are implemented to meet the child's individual needs.

Training and Resources:

Development and training for staff is ongoing and high profile at Cotton End. The SENCo plans and delivers staff meetings or INSET training, involving external agencies where appropriate, if she feels a need is identified. This may be due to feedback from teachers, following observations, or to cater for all of the needs of children in the school.

We have staff trained in: SEND, Sounds-Write, Makaton, positive behaviour management, diabetes, first aid, anti-bullying, identifying mental health difficulties and speech and language.

We will continue to develop staff/governors expertise by making full use of courses provided by the Education Authority, National conferences and other agencies or staff training days, drawing on staff specialisation.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All teachers in school teach pupils with Special Educational Needs.

The following people have particular responsibility:

- The Head Teacher Mrs Karen Headland and SENCo, Mrs Diane Catchpole, ensure that the school's provision for children with additional needs is met and children's progress evaluated on a regular basis. The SENCo provides feedback to the SEN Governor on a regular basis to discuss programmes of support and individual needs.
- Class teachers provide a planned curriculum that meets the needs of all the learners in their care. They monitor and evaluate all children's progress and set future targets for them. They report to the SENCo any child that may be causing concern and are responsible for reviewing and updating children's individual needs action plans every half term.
- Teaching assistants provide specific support and carry out planned activities according to children's individual targets and needs.
- Midday Supervisors and other support staff are aware of children who may require more support and they are given strategies to support children at lunch time when necessary.

Storing and Managing Information:

The records kept in school are appropriate for all children. It is important that records for all children are accurate, yet as positive as possible. This is particularly important for children with special educational needs.

Reviewing the Policy:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCo. Any changes made will be shared with parents/carers, governors and staff.

Accessibility:

Cotton End Forest School understands its duty to cater for disabled children, in line with the SEN and Disability Act 2001 (please refer to Cotton End Forest School Accessibility Plan 2024-27). The school is all on ground level with disabled toilet facilities. The school is equipped to educate children from aged 2-11 with specialist resources acquired when necessary. Cotton End Forest school is built on one level with easy access for wheelchair users. The school has a wide disabled toilet for pupil/adult use.

We promote an inclusive ethos and teachers work hard to ensure all children are catered for in all lessons, and clubs, activities and school trips. We pride ourselves on knowing our children well and working closely with families to identify any potential barriers to learning which may prevent a child from progressing. This may be done through discussions with parents/carers, discussions with children, observations and wellbeing and involvement scores.

Dealing with Complaints:

Cotton End Forest School Governing Body has an agreed, compliments, concerns and complaints policy. We encourage parents/carers to speak to teachers or Headteacher in the first instance if they have a concern about their child. If the matter is not resolved then parents should contact the SEND Governor or the Chair of Governors who can be contacted through the school office on 01234 740100 or email office@cottonendforestschool.co.uk

Bullying:

Cotton End Forest School does not tolerate bullying behaviour. Teachers use PSHE sessions, values assemblies and through modelling good, positive behaviour to educate children on bullying and how to deal with it. This is particularly important for vulnerable pupils, who are closely monitored on the playground. Teachers also work hard to promote independence and build resilience in a child's learning.

Please refer to the anti-bullying policy for more details.

Educational Health Care Plan:

The majority of children with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years setting and schools. Some children may require an Education Health Care needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across educational, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

The Local Offer:

As part of the Code of Practice July 2014. Local authorities **must** publish a Local Offer, providing information about provision they expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in their area who have SEND or are disabled.

The Local Offer has two key purposes:

- To provide clear, comprehensive, accessible and up-to-date information about the available provision and how to access it, and
- To make provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEND and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

The local offer for Bedford Borough is available on Bedford Borough website:

<https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/home.page>

Supporting Children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties:

We recognise that some children have additional emotional and social needs that need to be developed and nurtured. Children can demonstrate these needs in a variety of ways, including behavioural difficulties, anxiousness, and being uncommunicative.

As a school we provide additional support for children identified with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The school have access to two mental health practitioners through the mental health support team. The CAMHS trained professionals work with individual pupils either 1:1 or in small groups with pupils who have additional SEMH needs.

The school also work with Canine Concern and have a weekly visit from 'Conker' the therapy dog. Children with identified SEMH needs are timetabled to spend time with Conker and read or play with him.

The school's Family Support Worker is trained as a Licensed Thrive and Family thrive practitioner.

As a school we follow Values education and teach the 11 values through assemblies, circle times and PSHE lessons. However, for some children who find aspects of this difficult we also offer:

- Protective behaviours strategies are promoted throughout the whole school and Forest school ethos.
- We display child friendly information around the school for where children can get help, agencies such as Child Line, NSPCC, Young carers and what to do if upset or concerned about bullying, including cyber bullying.
- There is a worry monster in each class for the children to place concerns in, this is emptied by the class teacher and all concerns are dealt with and support provided as required.
- The children are supported to discuss their feelings and share their thoughts.
- All staff receive behaviour training and support.
- Pastoral support plans are written with the pupil and the Family support worker.
- If behaviour continues to persist, Behaviour plans are drawn up with the deputy head teacher and family support worker, and shared with staff who support the child and parents/ carers.
- The school works hard with all parties to try and prevent the exclusion of any child.

Other services:

The Governing Body of the school support the involvement of any external agencies to meet the needs of all pupils and families across the school including those with SEND. Any involvement of support agencies is acquired through the appropriate referral procedures. These agencies include speech and language, behaviour support, educational psychology, social care, 0-19 Health team and paediatrician

Transition:

All children joining the school in Nursery and Reception have a home visit and our staff visit any previous setting before a child starts with us. We liaise closely with our feeder schools and ensure that our pupils are well prepared for transition to the next stage of their education. Transition arrangements include visits to us from Secondary school staff and visits from our children to the secondary school they choose to attend. All parents are encouraged to visit the schools available to them in order to make an informed choice for their child. If a child has an Education and Health Care plan, parents/ carers will be consulted about their wishes for the next stage of their education and if a special school is requested by parents this will be amended in Section I of the EHCP following a review and consultation with the school.