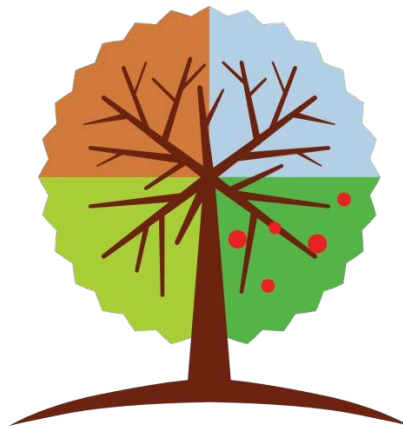


Special Educational Needs Policy

2026–2027



Serenity School

Responsible post holder	Headteacher
Approved by / on	September 2026
Next review	September 2027
Publication method	Website, Staff Handbook

1. Purpose and legal framework

Serenity School is an independent specialist SEND setting. This policy sets out how the school delivers, reviews and develops specialist provision for pupils with identified special educational needs and disabilities, ensuring that each pupil can participate fully in school life, make meaningful progress and prepare successfully for adulthood.

The policy has been developed with regard to the legal framework relevant to Serenity School, including the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010. Serenity also has regard to, and follows the principles and good practice set out within, the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015), where these are relevant and appropriate to its provision. References to the Code within this policy should not be read as suggesting that every statutory duty within the Code applies to Serenity in the same way as it applies to maintained schools, academies or section 41 approved institutions.

Serenity uses the statutory definition of SEND within the Children and Families Act 2014. A child or young person has SEND where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Many pupils with SEND may also be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.

Serenity provides specialist provision across the four broad areas of need:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/or physical needs

2. Principles and aims

Serenity believes that every pupil is entitled to an ambitious, inclusive and personalised education which recognises strengths, aspirations, communication needs and individual barriers to learning. As a specialist setting, the school's focus is not on determining whether pupils have SEND after admission, but on understanding each pupil's identified needs and continually refining provision so that agreed outcomes can be achieved.

The school aims to:

- place the pupil's views, communication profile, strengths and aspirations at the centre of planning and review;
- work in partnership with parents and carers as key partners in the pupil's education;
- provide full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum through appropriate specialist pathways, adaptations and support;
- use assessment, observation and professional advice to review provision and respond to changes or emerging aspects of need;
- ensure Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) are implemented and reviewed appropriately;
- use specialist, therapeutic and multidisciplinary input where required;
- make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers to participation;

- prepare pupils for adulthood, including further education, employment, independent living, health and community participation;
- maintain high-quality professional development so that staff have the knowledge and skills required to meet pupils' needs.

3. Serenity's specialist SEND provision

All pupils admitted to Serenity have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Their identified needs, agreed outcomes, prior assessments and commissioning information inform provision from the point of admission. High-quality specialist teaching is the foundation of the school's offer, supported by targeted intervention, therapeutic provision, communication support, environmental adaptations and assistive technology where appropriate.

Pupil progress is understood broadly. Assessment and review may draw on attainment alongside observation, engagement, interaction, communication, independence, regulation, functional skills, developmental progress and evidence from a pupil's individual communication system.

Serenity recognises that pupils may communicate in different ways. Pupil participation will be enabled through the communication methods and systems appropriate to the individual, which may include AAC, symbols, signing, gesture, visual communication, objects of reference or other established approaches. Where a pupil is non-speaking/non-verbal, has limited functional communication, or communicates distress, preference or unmet need through behaviour, staff will use appropriate alternative methods to understand and record the pupil's views. Spoken language will not be treated as a prerequisite for meaningful participation.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively within the school and that pupils receive provision consistent with their EHCPs, assessed needs and agreed outcomes. The Headteacher works with the SENDCo, Senior Leadership Team and Proprietary Board to maintain oversight of provision, resources, staffing and quality.

SENDCo

The school-based SENDCo coordinates the operational delivery of SEND provision. The SENDCo works with the Proprietary Board and Senior Leadership Team to support the strategic development of SEND policy and provision and has day-to-day responsibility for coordinating specific provision for pupils with SEND, including pupils with EHCPs.

Key responsibilities include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy;
- coordinating provision for pupils with SEND;
- liaising with the Designated Teacher where a looked-after pupil has SEND;
- supporting the graduated approach to reviewing and refining provision;

- advising on the effective deployment of resources to meet pupils' needs;
- liaising with parents and carers and coordinating this work with relevant members of the Senior Leadership Team where appropriate;
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies where relevant;
- acting as a key point of contact with external agencies, particularly commissioning local authorities and relevant support services;
- liaising with future education providers to support successful transition;
- working with school leaders and the Proprietary Board to support the school's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- ensuring that SEND records are accurate and up to date.

Teachers and specialist staff

All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils they teach, including where pupils receive support from teaching assistants, therapists or other specialist staff. Teachers use assessment and observation to plan appropriate next steps, make adaptations, implement agreed strategies and evaluate impact.

Proprietary Board

The Proprietary Board provides oversight of the effectiveness of SEND provision, including policy implementation, accessibility, reasonable adjustments, use of resources, pupil progress, parent and pupil participation, staff development and the impact of specialist provision.

5. Admissions, EHCPs and commissioning

Serenity only admits pupils with an EHCP. Placement is considered through the school's admissions and suitability assessment process and the commissioning arrangements agreed with the relevant local authority.

Once an EHCP names Serenity School, the Headteacher and SENDCo ensure that staff working with the pupil understand the pupil's needs, outcomes and required provision. Teachers and specialist staff monitor progress throughout the year and formal reviews of the EHCP take place at least annually. Where needs or circumstances change, the school will work with the pupil, parents or carers, relevant professionals and the local authority to consider whether amendments to provision or placement are required.

Annual review arrangements will include the pupil's views, obtained and recorded using the pupil's individual communication system where necessary. Where a pupil cannot provide conventional verbal pupil voice, staff will use supported communication, observation and consultation with people who know the pupil well.

6. Assess – Plan – Do – Review

Serenity uses a graduated approach to review and refine specialist provision for pupils whose SEND is already identified. The purpose is to evaluate the impact of current support, respond to changing needs or presentation, and make timely adjustments to teaching, intervention, therapy, communication support, staffing or the environment.

The school retains two graduated-response diagrams as reference tools. The first illustrates the wider SEND graduated approach; the second sets out Serenity's four-step model for specialist practice. At Serenity, both are interpreted within the context of pupils who already have identified SEND and an EHCP.

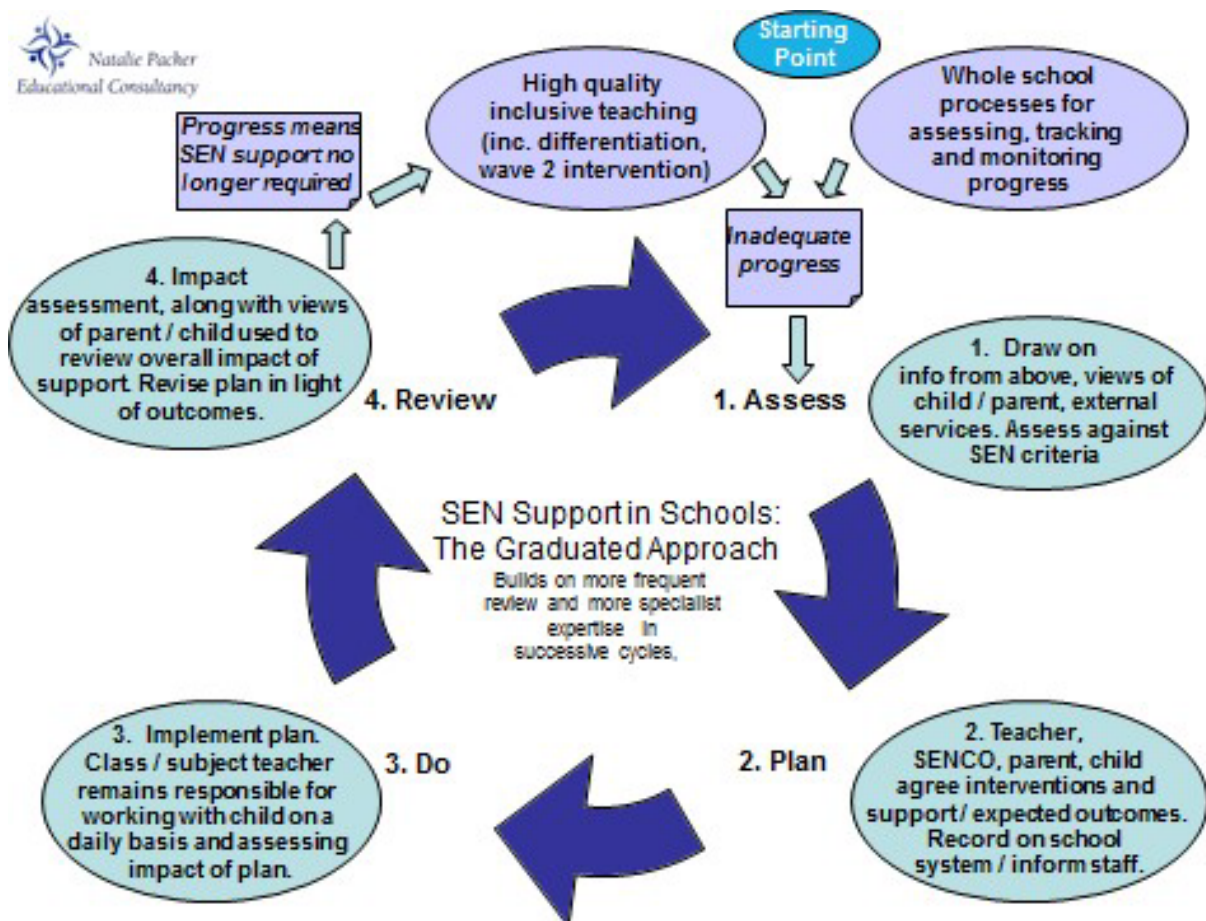


Figure 1. Graduated approach reference model

Serenity's graduated response

The cycle is continuous. It begins with the pupil's existing EHCP outcomes, baseline information, prior assessments, current presentation and professional advice. Where progress is not as expected, or a pupil's needs or presentation change, provision is reviewed with the pupil, parents or carers and relevant professionals.

Assess: Review the pupil's existing needs, EHCP outcomes, prior assessment, baseline information, communication profile and professional advice. Consider progress, engagement, regulation, independence, attainment and other relevant developmental indicators.

Plan: Agree provision around the pupil's identified needs, strengths, aspirations and outcomes. Plan strategies, adaptations, interventions and specialist input with clear intended outcomes and measures of impact.

Do: Teachers and specialist staff implement the agreed provision and adaptations. Staff use ongoing assessment and observation to evaluate response and make appropriate day-to-day adjustments within the agreed plan.

Review: Evaluate progress and the impact of provision against individual outcomes and targets. Consider pupil and parent/carer views, assessment information and professional advice. Where provision is not having the intended impact, or needs have changed, repeat the cycle and refine support. Where appropriate, this may inform an EHCP annual review or a request to the local authority to consider amendments to provision or placement.

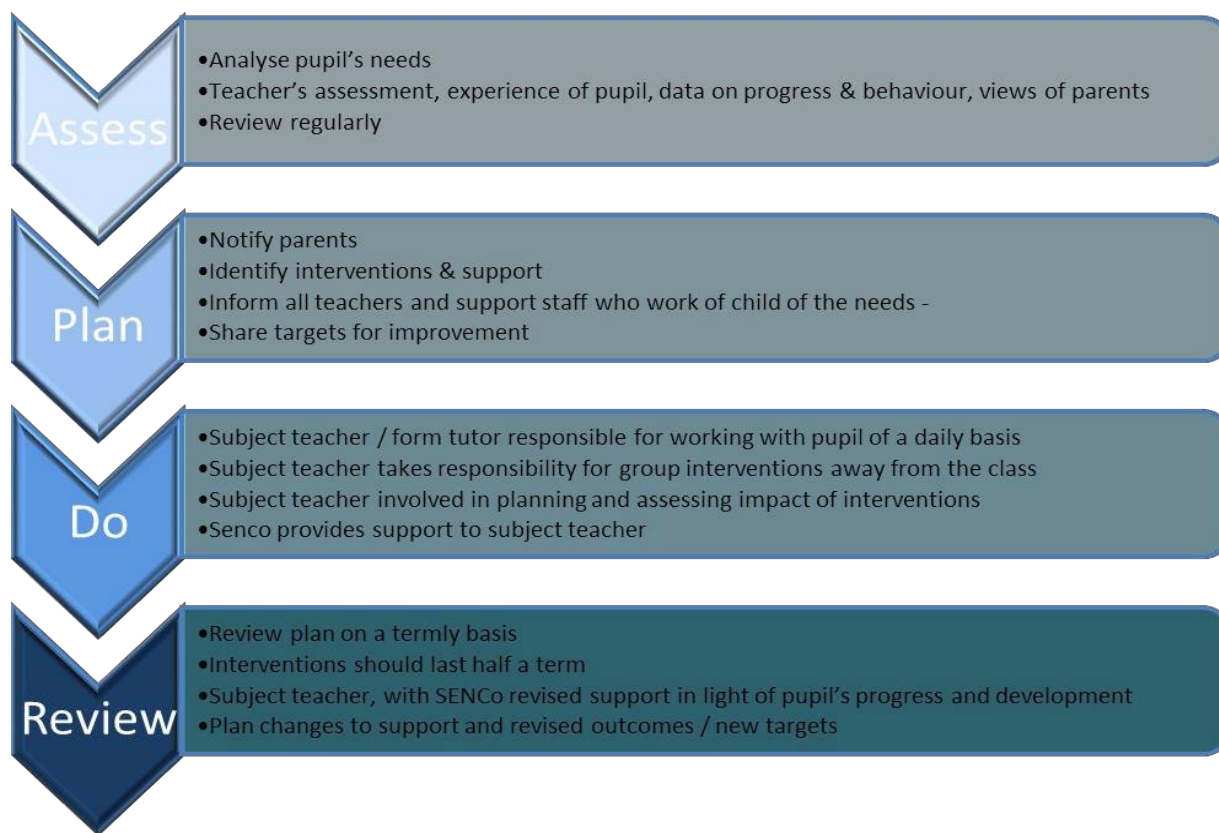


Figure 2. Serenity School Assess-Plan-Do-Review model

7. Teaching, curriculum and assessment

High-quality specialist teaching, appropriately adapted and personalised, is the foundation of Serenity's provision. Teaching is planned from the outset to reflect each pupil's EHCP, assessed needs, baseline information, communication profile and agreed outcomes.

Teachers set ambitious and appropriate expectations and use the curriculum or relevant programmes of study in ways that are suitable to the pupil's pathway and needs. Planning addresses barriers to participation at the outset and may include differentiated or adapted teaching, communication support, sensory regulation, ancillary aids, assistive technology and environmental adjustments.

Ongoing assessment informs planning and identifies appropriate next steps. Staff use existing information as a starting point, identify strengths and areas requiring support, collaborate with parents and carers, seek the pupil's views and take responsibility for planning and overseeing agreed interventions or support arrangements.

Serenity has regard to the National Curriculum inclusion principles where relevant to the pupil's programme of study. The school's priority is that the curriculum remains ambitious, accessible and appropriate to individual need.

8. Specialist and multidisciplinary provision

Serenity uses specialist and multidisciplinary input to support the whole pupil. The school's specialist team includes, where available and appropriate:

- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Psychotherapy
- Counselling

The school also works with external professionals and agencies where appropriate, including educational psychology, social care, relevant health services, NHS professionals, autism-related services and other specialist organisations. External agencies may review relevant records and undertake further assessment where appropriate, subject to the relevant lawful basis and consent requirements.

9. Accessibility and reasonable adjustments

Accessibility arrangements vary across Serenity's school sites. Each school considers the individual accessibility requirements of pupils and visitors and makes reasonable adjustments where required in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Information about the facilities and accessibility arrangements at an individual school can be provided by that school on request.

Individual risk assessments are used where required in relation to access to the school and wider facilities. The school seeks to remove barriers to participation and, where appropriate, provides ancillary aids, assistive technology, communication support and environmental adjustments.

10. Pupil voice and partnership with parents and carers

Pupil participation

Pupils will be enabled and encouraged to participate in decisions about their education, including target setting, personal planning, annual reviews, transition planning and discussions about future options. The method used to obtain the pupil's views will reflect their communication profile and individual needs.

Where spoken language is not accessible, staff will use appropriate supported communication, AAC, symbols, signing, gesture, objects of reference, observation and consultation with people who know the pupil well. Behaviour and changes in presentation may provide important information about the pupil's experience, preferences or unmet needs.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers are key partners in the education of pupils at Serenity. The school will acknowledge and draw on their knowledge of their child, focus on strengths as well as areas of need, ensure that procedures are explained clearly, share relevant documents in advance of meetings where possible, respect differing perspectives and communication needs, and provide flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings where reasonably practicable.

11. Preparing for adulthood and transition

Serenity supports pupils to prepare for adult life as early as possible and by Year 9 at the latest. Planning considers the pupil's aspirations, strengths, needs and likely support requirements for the next stage of education and adulthood.

Preparation for adulthood includes, as appropriate:

- employment and vocational pathways;
- further education and post-16 options;
- independent living and functional life skills;
- community participation and relationships;
- health and wellbeing;
- careers information, advice and guidance;
- understanding how support may change when moving between settings or into adulthood.

Serenity has regard to the principles and expectations set out in Chapter 8 of the SEND Code of Practice when supporting pupils with EHCPs to prepare for adulthood. Transition is planned with receiving and sending schools, colleges and other relevant providers, with the SENDCo and Headteacher coordinating arrangements as appropriate.

12. Funding and resources

Placement funding is agreed with the commissioning local authority according to the individual pupil's assessed needs, the provision required to meet those needs and the arrangements agreed as part of the placement commissioning process. Serenity's SEND Provision Map supports the costing and planning of provision.

Where a pupil has an EHCP, the local authority remains responsible for securing the special educational provision specified in the Plan. A Personal Budget may be available where the relevant statutory criteria and local authority arrangements are met; having an EHCP does not automatically mean that a pupil will have a Personal Budget.

13. Professional development

Professional development for staff involved in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND is ongoing. Training may include:

- sharing and demonstration of specialist teaching techniques and strategies within the school;
- professional development delivered by SEND specialists;
- accredited and non-accredited external training relevant to staff roles and pupil needs;
- training identified through performance management, school priorities, professional interest or SENDCo review.

14. Monitoring, evaluation and published information

The effectiveness of this policy and the quality of SEND provision will be monitored by the SENDCo, Headteacher, relevant school leaders and Proprietary Board. Monitoring will consider the quality and impact of provision, pupil progress and outcomes, use of resources, professional development, pupil participation, relationships with parents and carers, annual review processes, external professional involvement and transition arrangements.

The school will review the effectiveness of its SEND provision regularly and use findings to inform further improvement and development.

Serenity will publish clear and accessible information on its website about its specialist SEND provision, including how pupils' needs are supported and how families can obtain further information. This information is provided to support transparency and accessibility and is not presented as the statutory SEN Information Report required of maintained schools and academies.

15. Complaints

Any complaint from a parent or carer concerning SEND provision should be raised through the school's Complaints Procedure, which is available on the school website. Complaints will be considered in accordance with that procedure and with regard to the pupil's communication, SEND and accessibility needs.

16. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there is a material change in legislation, statutory guidance, Serenity's organisational arrangements or the needs of the pupils served by the school.