



# The Sunflower Federation **Admissions Arrangements**

**FGB 11.2.2025**

(Due to be reviewed 2027)

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Chair of Governor

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**Admission to The Sunflower Federation is in accordance with 'The Children and Families Act (2015)** legislation relating to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The School Admissions Code ('the Code') was issued in 2014 under Section 84 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

Parents are fully involved in all stages of their child's education, health and care assessment, and their views, together with the views of all professionals concerned are considered carefully.

All pupils attending The Sunflower Federation schools require a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The Sunflower Federation is able to offer assessment placements for those children that are in the process of EHCP completion; these placements are agreed in consultation with Hertfordshire Local Authority (LA) and are subject to suitability and student vacancies at the schools.

Hertfordshire LA is the placing authority and it is their decision as to whether a child receives a place at one of the Sunflower Federation schools. Head teachers from a range of special schools attend the Provision Panels to support the LA in their decision making process.

In line with the LA transport policy, children are admitted to their nearest suitable school unless there are other considerations which are considered on an individual basis. Parental wishes are considered, as well as the views of the schools with the regards to areas such as staff expertise, class dynamics and the pressure of numbers.

**The Sunflower Federation comprises two schools that provide specialist provision for their students:**

**Breakspeare School** caters for students with severe and profound learning (SLD) difficulties. Students are admitted on a part time basis 15 hours per week (nursery) until they reach compulsory school age (reception), at which stage they attend full time.

Students can remain at the school until a suitable leaving date after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. As the majority of students go on to attend a course at a further education college the usual leaving date is at the end of the summer term, for a September start at college. Where students move on to day centres or health establishments, the student could leave at the end of the term in which they are 19. Any student can leave school once the statutory school leaving age has been reached.

A new student can be admitted to Breakspeare School at any age, between 3 - 19.

**Meadow Wood School** is a primary school which offers placements for students with physical and neurological impairments (PNI) from early years, age 3, up to age of 10/11 (year 6). Students' attainment varies from below and at National Curriculum levels. The students' transition to their secondary placement is carefully tailored: students may transfer to SLD, PNI or other settings that meet their educational and physical needs.

A new student can be admitted to Meadow Wood School at any age, between 3 - 11.

## **The LA uses a specific admission guidance on admissions to special schools.**

**Breakspeare School:** When considering a placement in a SLD school such as Breakspeare School, the LA gathers information on the child's special educational needs from a range of professionals including educational psychologists, therapists and from the previous provision.

Children and Young People (CYP) will be operating in the SLD cognitive range, as described below, and their ability to make progress will be limited across all areas of development. They have a life-long learning disability, which requires a multi-disciplinary service response.

Where there has been standardised testing of cognitive functioning, the vast majority of CYP will be assessed as being at or below the 1st percentile. Progress of children and young people will be measured using the engagement and progress steps. Pre key stage standards replaced P levels 5 – 8 from September 2018 for SLD pupils who can access subject-based study, and P levels 1 – 4 will be replaced with an engagement model in 2021.

Children and young people will have significant and multiple disabilities, which may include some or all of the following:

### Severe learning difficulties

- Profound and multiple learning difficulties
- Autistic spectrum conditions
- Significant difficulties with communication (expressive and/or receptive language)
- Sensory impairment

This may manifest itself in some or all of the following:

- Considerable difficulties with appropriate social interaction and understanding
- Associated challenging behaviour
- Limited self-help skills and awareness of danger
- Predominantly dependent on adults for personal care skills
- Reliant on adults for activities, and travel dependent

Associated secondary needs may include:

- Related physical difficulties including those with significant and severe needs
- Related medical difficulties including those with life-limiting conditions
- Fine and gross motor difficulties
- Multi-sensory impairment
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Sensory integration difficulties

Typically CYP in an SLD setting will require a highly differentiated and personalised curriculum to meet their assessed significant profile of need. A high priority is placed on developing CYP's communication, independence, social and functional everyday living skills.

SLD schools will use, for example, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework, Routes or Quest for Learning framework, and different pathways of learning (such as pre-formal, semi-formal or formal) and a wide variety of accredited modules for post 16.

Pre-school age children will be functioning at significantly below their chronological age, i.e. below half their chronological age in most areas of development. They may have an inconsistent development profile.

Children and young people will require a highly differentiated and personalised curriculum to meet their significant profile of need. The opportunities for independent learning and activities will be limited.

**Meadow Wood School:** When considering a placement in a PNI school, such as Meadow Wood School, the LA gathers information on the child's special educational needs from a range of professionals including educational psychologists, therapists and from the previous provision.

Children and young people attending a Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI) special school will have severe physical difficulties as their main presenting need, which could not be met within a mainstream setting with reasonable adjustments.

Their disability may be caused by injury, illness, a congenital condition or genetic disorder that causes a loss of or difference in physiological or psychological function. They may have little control over their physical functioning, and their disability may have a severe or profound effect upon their ability to access learning and on their attainment and achievement at school. These children and young people may also have a range of other needs associated with their physical difficulties which may include sensory impairments or an additional neurological impairment such as epilepsy.

Children and young people in a PNI school will have a range of cognitive functioning, and rates of progress can be very varied. Some children and young people will be linguistically and academically able, while others may have significant developmental delay and/or below average attainments. All, however, will have the ability to be active and interested participants in their environment and seek to gain an understanding of their personal worlds through physical exploration. All children and young people will require a physical curriculum to support their learning and the development of their physical, communication and cognitive skills.

Some children and young people may have difficulties with speech, language and communication and require the use of alternative or augmentative approaches and aids to support their communication. Some children and young people may have difficulties with swallowing, feeding and drinking, and may require a gastrostomy tube to enable their nutritional needs to be met. They may also have significant health needs which require regular or continuous medical intervention.

Children and young people attending a PNI special school may require a wide variety of specialist equipment in order to access learning and to support the development of their learning and of their physical and communication skills. They may also be dependent on others for some or all of their personal care and travel needs.

Children and young people in a PNI special school will also require the intervention of therapy and healthcare professionals to:

- Regularly assess and review therapy and healthcare needs
- Provide goal-based therapy programmes adapted to children and young people's learning and developmental needs, and appropriate for a school setting
- Provide direct therapy intervention according to clinical need
- Provide support, advice and training for school staff in relation to access to learning and the curriculum, and the development of children and young people's physical skills, communication skills and health management
- Communicate regularly with parents about children and young people's health and therapy provision and the impact of health and therapy intervention.

For younger children it may initially be difficult to establish the true level of their cognitive functioning. While it can be difficult to differentiate between a main presenting need of PNI or SLD in the early years, this is usually clearer at the time of transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 or at secondary transfer.

Where a child at secondary transfer meets the admissions guidance for placement in an SLD school, then placement in a secondary PNI specialist provision is not normally appropriate. Young people attending a secondary mainstream provision will be able to access the mainstream secondary curriculum with specialist support and adaptation and will have therapy and medical needs that can be met within a mainstream provision with additional resources.

**The Sunflower Federation's statement on high quality provision and outcomes for children and young people with SEND.** The special educational needs and disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) requires all local authorities to describe the special educational provision it expects to be available for children and young people who have SEND.

**The response of the Sunflower Federation to those requirements:**

**The SEND Code of Practice (2015) says that we must:**

- Have regard to the principles underpinning the code of practice to ensure the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents, are central to achieving the best possible educational and other outcomes.
- Use our best endeavours to make sure that all children with SEN get the support they require.
- Publish and update at least annually the SEN information report.

**Our Vision relating to SEND local offer is;**

**'All children and young people at The Sunflower Federation Schools have access to high quality local provision that meets their needs.'**

- In the Sunflower Federation Schools the duties of the SENCO are carried out by the Head teacher.
- There is full time nursing cover to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required.
- The schools caters for pupils with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. Our accessibility plan shows how we plan to improve access over time.
- The Sunflower Federation co-operates fully with the LA in the education, health and care plan review process and in reviewing the provision that is available locally (Chapter 3) and in developing the Local Offer.

**Our Jointly Agreed Commitments:**

- Every child and young person will have their needs identified and assessed.
- Every child and young person is entitled to high quality provision appropriate for her or his individual needs.
- The Sunflower Federation Schools and the LA have a shared accountability for ensuring children and young people achieve good outcomes.
- There will be a continuum of provision tailored to need,
- Roles and accountabilities will be clear and focused on the needs children and young people.
- Information on funding and decision making will be transparent and without unnecessary bureaucracy.
- Resources will be used effectively and equitably.
- There will be a focus on developing preventative and early intervention approaches.
- Children, young people and their parents participate fully in decisions about provision and services.
- The Sunflower Federation will work collectively with relevant early years settings and colleges to share effective practice and make best use of resources.
- The LA will facilitate capacity building so that local schools, early years settings and colleges are able to meet the needs of children and young people.
- Co-ordinated and integrated approaches will be developed and maintained with other agencies and voluntary organisations.

**1. We will make high quality provision that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND through:**

- High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised.
- Fully including children and young people and their families in the life of the school.
- Responding to the particular needs of children and young people with SEND in specific circumstances, including children looked after.
- Having a clear approach to identifying those who require SEN Support at the earliest point.
- Using a graduated approach, in the form of a four part cycle of assess, plan, do and review, through which decisions and actions are made, revisited, refined and revised .
- Removing barriers to learning and putting effective SEN provision in place.
- Evidencing the use of reasonable adjustments, ensuring access to the curriculum, written word and learning environment.
- Using provision mapping and management to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils, providing a basis for monitoring.
- Ensuring the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the governing body, determines the strategic development of SEN policy and provision.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of special educational provision, through normal school improvement systems.
- Strategically planning professional development to secure enhanced expertise for all staff working regularly with children and young people.

**2. We will improve short and long term outcomes for children and young people with SEND through:**

- Promoting high expectations and ensuring all children and young people achieve their best.
- Ensuring teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
- Developing the effectiveness of teaching and learning through the monitoring and evaluation approaches used in the school.
- Ensuring use of the graduated approach, fully engages with parents, children and young people and clearly evidences progress towards outcomes.
- Supporting the emotional, mental and social development of children and young people, including providing extra support for listening to the views of children and young people and measures to prevent bullying.
- Thorough planning and preparation for the transitions between phases in education and preparation for adult life.

**3. We will communicate sensitively, appropriately and effectively with parents, children and young people with SEND, engendering trust, confidence, respect and constructive partnership working through:**

- Ensuring that children and young people and their parents have the opportunities to fully participate in discussions and have a sense of co-ownership of desired outcomes.
- Keeping a record of the agreed outcomes, actions and support and sharing this with families and appropriate school staff.
- Informing parents when special educational provision is made for their child.
- Arranging meetings with parents, allowing sufficient time to explore the parents' views and to plan effectively.

**4. We will manage resources for SEN through a transparent approach that is fair, meets the needs of children and young people with SEND and achieves best value for money through:**

- Deploying the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Regularly reviewing how expertise and resources can be used to improve the quality of whole-school provision.
- Managing provision to contribute to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need and potential areas of development for teaching staff.
- Ensuring the governing board has specific oversight of the school's arrangements for particular groups of children with SEN and disability.

**5. Work proactively and collaboratively to improve SEND provision through:**

- Participating in the development and delivery of local services through DSPL groups.
- Working with health and social care, LA support services and voluntary sector organisations.
- Agreeing actions that ensure successful transitions between schools, phases, year groups, lessons as appropriate.
- Cooperating with the LA in responding to recommendations from all SEND strategy work-streams (2015-2018).
- Cooperating with the LA to review and develop the Local Offer through their SEN Information Report.
- Regular review, monitoring and evaluation, including the views, experiences and involvement of pupils, parents and others.

Further information about the provision at The Sunflower Federation schools can be found on our SEN Information report on our schools' websites

## **References**

[The Hertfordshire SEND Local Offer](#)

SEND Code of Practice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

School Admissions Code:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-admissions-code--2>

Children and Families Act 2014:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>