

The ReConnect Programme – SEN Policy

OWNERSHIP:	The ReConnect Programme
AUTHORISED BY:	Chief Operating Officer
REVIEW:	August 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to promote the successful inclusion, participation, progress and wellbeing of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who attend The ReConnect Programme. It explains how ReConnect identifies and responds to need, makes reasonable adjustments, works with commissioners and families, and reviews the impact of support.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, workers, contractors and volunteers involved in the referral, planning, delivery, support, assessment or review of placements at The ReConnect Programme. It applies to young people with identified SEND, those undergoing assessment, and those whose presentation suggests that additional or different provision may be required.

Safeguarding commitment

Children and young people with SEND may face additional safeguarding barriers. ReConnect will ensure that communication needs, behaviour as communication, dependency on adults, difficulties recognising risk and barriers to reporting are considered in safeguarding practice. Concerns will be managed under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and shared with the commissioner and relevant agencies where appropriate.

Definitions

Special educational needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN where they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Special educational provision is provision that is additional to or different from that generally made for others of the same age, considered in the context of the young person's education and placement.

Disability

A person is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 where they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A young person may be disabled, have SEN, or both.

SEND

SEND is the collective term for special educational needs and disabilities.

EHCP

An Education, Health and Care Plan is a statutory plan maintained by a local authority. ReConnect does not issue or amend EHCPs, but contributes evidence and delivers agreed provision within the commissioned placement.

POLICY

General Principles

The views, wishes and feelings of the young person and their parent or carer will inform planning and review.

Every young person will be treated with dignity and high expectations, without needs being used to limit aspiration.

Staff will seek to understand what a young person's behaviour, engagement and communication may be expressing.

Support will be person-centred, trauma-informed, strengths-based and proportionate to assessed need. High-quality, accessible and appropriately adapted delivery is the first response to emerging need.

Decisions will be evidence-based and made collaboratively with the commissioner, home school, local authority and relevant professionals.

Support will focus on preparation for adulthood, including independence, relationships, community participation, further education, training and employment where age-appropriate.

Aims

ReConnect aims to ensure that young people with SEND:

are welcomed, safe, understood and able to participate meaningfully in their placement

receive provision that is responsive to their individual profile, interests, strengths and needs

make progress from their starting points across education, personal development, engagement, communication and wellbeing

develop confidence, self-advocacy, resilience and increasing independence

experience consistent partnership working between ReConnect, families, commissioners and professionals

are supported to make successful transitions into their next placement, education, training or adulthood

Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Operating Officer and Directors

- Ensure that governance, staffing, training, resources, accessibility and quality assurance support this policy.
- Clarify ReConnect's contractual responsibilities and ensure that the provision does not accept placements it cannot safely or appropriately meet.
- Monitor compliance, significant concerns, complaints and improvement actions.

Head of Provision

- Hold operational responsibility for inclusive practice and the quality of SEND provision.
- Ensure that referrals, risk information, EHCP content and professional advice are considered before a placement is agreed.
- Coordinate with commissioners where needs, risk or required provision change.
- Ensure suitable staff deployment, review arrangements and transition planning.

SEND Lead

ReConnect will identify a suitably experienced SEND Lead. As a non-school AP, this role is an organisational SEND lead and should not be confused with the statutory SENCO role required in specified registered settings.

- Advise staff on SEND, inclusive practice, reasonable adjustments and the graduated approach.
- Support referral review, individual planning, provision mapping and review of outcomes.
- Maintain oversight of SEND records and ensure information is current and accessible to relevant staff.
- Liaise with the home school SENCO, local authority, families and external professionals.
- Identify staff-development needs and evaluate the impact of support.

All Staff

- Know and implement the young person's agreed plan, risk assessment and reasonable adjustments.
- Plan accessible activities and adapt communication, environment, pace, resources and support.
- Record objective evidence of engagement, progress, barriers, successful strategies and concerns.
- Seek advice promptly and avoid making diagnostic assumptions.
- Promote independence and avoid creating unnecessary reliance on adult support.

Commissioning School or Local Authority

The commissioner retains responsibility for the suitability, oversight and review of the placement and for its own statutory duties. ReConnect expects the commissioner to provide complete and current information, identify intended outcomes and funding, remain involved in review, share changes promptly and coordinate statutory

processes.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

ReConnect does not diagnose SEN. Needs may already be identified through an EHCP, SEN support plan, professional report or referral information. Staff may also identify patterns that indicate an unmet or changing need and will share evidence with the SEND Lead and commissioner.

The four broad areas of need described in the current SEND Code of Practice are:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- sensory and/or physical needs

These areas provide a helpful starting point, not labels. A young person may have needs across more than one area and the interaction between needs may be more important than any single category.

Factors That Are Not SEN in Themselves

Slow progress, distressed behaviour or low engagement does not automatically mean that a young person has SEN. ReConnect will consider the whole context, including:

- attendance and punctuality
- health, sleep, medication and wellbeing
- trauma, bereavement and adverse experiences
- English as an additional language
- being looked after or previously looked after
- family or placement change
- gaps in education or limited prior access to learning
- disadvantage, safeguarding concerns or unmet basic needs

These factors may coexist with SEN and must not be used to dismiss a possible need. Disability alone does not necessarily constitute SEN, although reasonable-adjustment duties may apply.

Referral and Placement Decision

Before accepting a placement, ReConnect will complete a proportionate review of available information. This will normally include:

- the current EHCP and most recent annual review, where applicable
- SEN support plans, individual learning plans, risk assessments and behaviour or regulation plans
- professional reports, including education, health, therapy and social-care advice

academic starting points, attendance, communication and engagement information
medical, medication, mobility, sensory, personal-care and accessibility requirements
safeguarding information and known risks to or from the young person
the views of the young person and parent or carer

the intended placement outcomes, timetable, review cycle, funding and named commissioner contact

ReConnect will identify whether it can meet need safely and appropriately, what adjustments or resources are required, and any conditions that must be resolved before the start date. Missing or contradictory information will be referred back to the commissioner. Acceptance of a placement is not confirmation that ReConnect can meet every need beyond the agreed scope.

The Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

ReConnect uses an Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle as a good-practice framework. The cycle becomes more detailed as understanding develops and should connect with the home school's or local authority's statutory processes.

Assess

Gather the young person's and family's views and identify strengths, aspirations and concerns.

Review referral records, EHCP outcomes, professional advice, prior strategies and current risk information.

Establish meaningful starting points across learning, engagement, attendance, communication, regulation, independence and wellbeing.

Observe in different activities and contexts and identify environmental or relational barriers.

Distinguish between a skill not yet acquired, a barrier to demonstrating it and a task or environment that is not accessible.

Plan

Agree clear, realistic and suitably ambitious outcomes with the young person and relevant adults.

Record the strategies, adjustments, interventions, resources, staff responsibilities and evidence required.

Identify how the young person will be involved and how information will be communicated to the family and commissioner.

Set a review date and define what success or concern will look like.

Do

Deliver the agreed programme consistently and ensure relevant staff understand the plan.

Embed adjustments within ordinary sessions wherever possible rather than relying only on separate

intervention.

Record concise, objective evidence and respond promptly when strategies are ineffective or risk changes.

Maintain communication with the named commissioner and professionals.

Review

Evaluate progress against the agreed outcomes and starting points, not only attendance or task completion.

Consider the young person's experience, family views and evidence from staff and professionals.

Identify what helped, what created barriers and what needs to change.

Agree whether support should continue, increase, reduce or be replaced and record the rationale.

Escalate concerns where the placement may no longer be suitable or statutory assessment or review may be required.

Individual Planning and Records

Each young person's planning documentation will be proportionate to need and commissioning requirements. It may include an individual learning plan (ILP), provision map, one-page profile, risk assessment, regulation or support plan, medical plan and chronological profile.

Plans will identify strengths, communication preferences, aspirations, relevant EHCP outcomes, current priorities, adjustments, support strategies, responsible staff, evidence measures and review dates. Staff will avoid duplicating documents where one clear plan can serve the purpose.

Formal placement progress will normally be reviewed at least termly, with earlier review where need, risk, engagement or circumstances change. Working strategies may be adjusted sooner and recorded through routine planning and communication.

Education, Health and Care Plans

Where a young person has an EHCP, ReConnect will:

- ensure relevant staff can access the sections needed to deliver the placement safely and effectively
- map the commissioned programme to relevant outcomes and specified provision within ReConnect's agreed role

- collect evidence of progress, barriers and the impact of support

- contribute reports or attend annual reviews when requested and reasonably practicable

- notify the commissioner promptly if specified provision is unclear, unavailable, no longer sufficient or outside ReConnect's commissioned scope

- not amend, reinterpret or promise changes to the EHCP on behalf of the local authority

The local authority remains responsible for maintaining and amending the EHCP and securing the special educational provision specified in it. The commissioning school or local authority remains responsible for overall placement oversight.

Reasonable Adjustments and Accessibility

ReConnect will anticipate and make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled young people from being placed at a substantial disadvantage when accessing its service. Decisions will consider effectiveness, practicality, safety, cost, available resources, disruption and the young person's views, without using these factors as a reason to avoid proper consideration.

Adjustments may include:

- adapted timetables, session length, transitions, breaks or arrival arrangements
- visual supports, simplified language, processing time or alternative communication methods
- reduced sensory load, quieter spaces, seating or environmental changes
- adapted resources, assistive technology, specialist equipment or alternative ways to demonstrate learning
- structured routines, advance preparation, co-regulation and predictable staffing
- physical-access arrangements and safe support with mobility or personal care where agreed and appropriately staffed

Where a requested adjustment cannot be made, the decision and alternatives will be discussed with the young person, family and commissioner and recorded. ReConnect will not accept a placement where essential needs cannot be met safely within the agreed resources and service.

High-Quality and Inclusive Delivery

All staff are responsible for accessible delivery. Planning should be responsive rather than based on a single fixed method. Staff will:

- connect activities to the young person's interests, aspirations and meaningful next steps
- break tasks into manageable stages and model or scaffold without removing appropriate challenge
- use clear routines, explicit expectations and multiple ways to engage and respond
- check understanding and avoid interpreting compliance, eye contact or verbal fluency as the only evidence of learning
- provide feedback that supports competence, motivation and independence
- review whether the environment or adult approach is contributing to difficulty before attributing it solely to the young person

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

ReConnect recognises that distressed, avoidant, withdrawn or unsafe behaviour may communicate unmet need. Staff will use relational, trauma-informed and restorative approaches while maintaining clear safeguarding and safety boundaries. Support will not replace specialist mental-health assessment or treatment where this is required. Concerns about significant deterioration, self-harm, suicide risk, exploitation or harm to others will be escalated immediately under safeguarding and emergency procedures.

Medical, Sensory and Physical Needs

Medical and accessibility arrangements will be agreed before or at the start of placement and reviewed when needs change. Staff will only undertake healthcare, moving and handling, personal care or specialist equipment tasks where the activity is within ReConnect's agreed role, a suitable plan is in place, consent has been addressed, and staff are trained and competent. Relevant policies include First Aid, Supporting Young People with Medical Conditions, Medication, Personal Care, Health and Safety and Emergency Procedures.

Working with Parents, Carers and Young People

ReConnect will seek meaningful participation, not simply provide information after decisions are made. Communication will be accessible, respectful and proportionate. Young people will be supported to express what helps, what is difficult, what they want to achieve and how they prefer adults to respond. Parents and carers will be encouraged to share knowledge of communication, regulation, health, successful strategies, concerns and aspirations.

Where views differ, ReConnect will record the perspectives, clarify its role and work with the commissioner to reach a safe and lawful decision. Information may be shared without consent where safeguarding or another lawful basis requires it.

External Professionals and Multi-Agency Working

ReConnect will cooperate with relevant professionals within the commissioned arrangement. These may include educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, mental-health services, social care, health professionals, virtual schools, youth justice services and SEND advisory teams.

Professional recommendations will be considered carefully and incorporated where relevant, safe, feasible and within scope. ReConnect will identify promptly where additional assessment, specialist advice, equipment, training or funding is needed. The commissioner or responsible statutory body retains responsibility for commissioning services outside ReConnect's contract.

Assessment and Access Arrangements

ReConnect will provide appropriate evidence to the centre responsible for examinations or qualifications. Formal access arrangements will be determined and approved by the registered centre in accordance with current awarding-body and Joint Council for Qualifications requirements. Arrangements must reflect the young person's

normal way of working and must not provide an unfair advantage.

Transitions

Transitions into, within and out of ReConnect will be planned according to individual need. This may include visits, visual information, phased attendance, named adults, transfer of strategies, transition passports, careers information and coordinated handover. ReConnect will provide an exit summary that identifies progress, successful adjustments, continuing barriers, risk information and recommendations for the receiving setting.

Staff Training and Support

Staff will receive SEND induction and ongoing training proportionate to their roles and the needs of current young people. Training may include autism, ADHD, speech, language and communication, dyslexia and literacy needs, sensory processing, trauma, SEMH, assistive technology, medical needs and positive support. Training alone does not authorise staff to undertake specialist or clinical tasks without competence assessment and an agreed plan.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy and SEND provision will be monitored through:

- progress against agreed outcomes and individual starting points
- attendance, engagement, participation, wellbeing and successful transitions
- young person and parent or carer feedback
- quality and timeliness of ILPs, provision maps, reports and review evidence
- implementation and impact of reasonable adjustments
- session observations, supervision, staff training and quality assurance
- incidents, safeguarding concerns, exclusions from activities, placement breakdowns and complaints
- commissioner feedback and multi-agency review

Data will be interpreted carefully. A reduced timetable, change of activity or placement ending will be reviewed to ensure that unmet need, inaccessible practice or avoidable barriers have not contributed.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

SEND information is personal data and may include special category data. It will be collected, shared, stored and retained in accordance with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and ReConnect's Data Protection and Records Retention policies. Staff will receive only the information needed for their role, while ensuring that safety and agreed provision are not undermined by inappropriate withholding of information.

Complaints and Escalation

Concerns about ReConnect's delivery should be raised promptly with the Head of Provision and may be progressed through the Complaints Policy. Complaints about an EHCP, statutory assessment, placement decision, local authority provision or home school's duties must be directed to the responsible organisation, although ReConnect will provide relevant evidence when requested. Safeguarding concerns must not wait for the complaints process.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and sooner following significant changes to legislation, the SEND Code of Practice, national AP standards, commissioning requirements or ReConnect's service. It will also be reviewed following a significant incident, complaint, placement breakdown or quality-assurance finding where learning indicates that change is needed.

Policy Context

AP context (non-school AP): The ReConnect Programme operates as a non-school Alternative Provision (AP). The statutory duties of a young person's home school, local authority and other responsible bodies remain with those organisations. ReConnect supports them by delivering the agreed placement, making reasonable adjustments within its service, implementing relevant elements of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) where commissioned, monitoring progress and sharing timely evidence. We adopt the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years and relevant school and AP guidance as good-practice benchmarks where appropriate to our role.

Appendix A: Minimum SEND Placement Record

Record	Minimum content
Referral decision	Information reviewed, needs identified, suitability decision, conditions and responsible manager.
Young person's profile	Strengths, aspirations, communication, interests, triggers, successful strategies and views.
Outcomes	Commissioned aims, relevant EHCP outcomes, starting points and evidence measures.
Provision and adjustments	What will be provided, frequency, responsible staff, resources and reasonable adjustments.
Risk and medical information	Current risk assessment, health plan, medication, mobility, sensory and emergency arrangements.
Review	Progress, impact, views, changes agreed, escalation and next review date.
Transition / exit	Evidence summary, strategies that work, continuing needs, risks and recommendations.

Appendix B: Key Legal and Guidance Framework

This policy is informed by the following framework, as amended from time to time. The list is not exhaustive and does not replace case-specific legal or commissioner advice.

Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, current published edition.

Equality Act 2010 and relevant education and service-provider duties.

Human Rights Act 1998.

Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

Department for Education guidance on arranging alternative provision.

Department for Education non-school Alternative Provision voluntary national standards.

Current safeguarding guidance and Suffolk commissioning or quality-assurance requirements.

The April 2026 SEND reform consultation proposes future changes, including an updated SEND Code of Practice. Until changes are enacted and replacement guidance takes effect, ReConnect will apply the current legal framework and update this policy when required.

VERSION CONTROL

We will review our documentation regularly and we reserve the right to amend our policies and procedures at any time.

Version	Date	Change Summary	Author/ Reviewer	Approved by:
1	29/08/2026	Initial Version	Naomi Hamer	Director