POLICY – Inclusion

Education Universal

Policy Author	Laura Dickie, Head of Policy Tonia Lewis, Education and Quality Improvement Lead
Approval Date	Feb 2026
Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
Next Review Date	Feb 2029
Version No.	001
Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	All Education

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval**,** or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

David Horton

Head of Education

Tracey Wilson

Principal

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Tutor/Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.

1. Local School/College Profile

The Forum School is an independent specialist day school providing education for pupils aged 7-19 years with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC), associated communication and interaction needs, and social, emotional and mental health needs. The school provides a highly structured, therapeutic learning environment that promotes emotional wellbeing, independence, resilience and positive relationships.
Many pupils have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and benefit from personalised learning programmes, therapeutic support and reasonable adjustments to enable them to succeed academically, socially and emotionally. The school works closely with families, local authorities, therapists and other professionals to ensure pupils receive coordinated support. The Forum School promotes a culture of kindness, respect and acceptance where differences are celebrated and every pupil is supported to feel safe, valued and included.

2. Purpose

This policy applies to The Forum School and sets out our commitment to an inclusive, aspirational learning environment, describing how we identify and respond to need, remove barriers to learning and ensure that every Learner can thrive academically, socially and emotionally.
It provides a universal framework and outlines the expectations that apply to:

- Staff
- Senior leaders
- Learners
- Visitors and contractors (where relevant)

This policy enables us to meet statutory duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, comply with data protection requirements, and maintain high-quality provision.

3. Scope

This organisational policy applies across all education sites, services and functions. It establishes the universal standards and expectations that must be followed consistently throughout the organisation.

Each site implements these standards in accordance with the statutory and regulatory requirements of the nation in which it operates as set out in **Appendix A-C.**

4. Local Adaptation Requirement

Some sections in this policy are marked *Adapt Locally.* These sections are completed by each site to reflect local operational procedures or national equivalents (e.g., safeguarding framework, inspection remit, curriculum/quality framework, data protection contacts).

Where England-specific statutory references appear in the universal policy, sites in Wales and Scotland insert their own national equivalents into the marked *Adapt Locally sections.*

All local additions are:

• Accurate
• Up to date
• Consistent with national legislation and regulator guidance
• Fully aligned with the universal standards in this policy

Where no local adaptation or local equivalent is required, the universal content remains fully applicable.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context (Universal)

The Forum School is governed by the statutory duties, safeguarding requirements and inspection arrangements of the nation in which it operates. The universal standards in this policy are implemented in line with the correct national frameworks set out in **Appendices A–C**, which summarise the legal, regulatory and inspection requirements for England, Wales and Scotland.

6. Policy Aims

Our aims guide all aspects of our inclusive practice and shape the decisions we make as a site. While our approach is relational and responsive, it is underpinned by high standards, national expectations and evidence-informed practice.
We aim to:

- Provide a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum that remains accessible to all Learners.
- Identify needs at the earliest point and respond with timely, evidence-based interventions.
- Promote emotional regulation, resilience and positive relationships through trauma-informed practice.
- Ensure that Learners with SEND and those with EHCPs make strong progress.
- Work closely with families, carers and external partners including social care, health and therapeutic agencies.
- Champion equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice throughout the site.
- Meet all statutory responsibilities set out in national legislation, statutory guidance and the regulatory requirements applicable to our site ensuring full compliance and continual readiness for inspection. See Appendix A-C.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The effective delivery of inclusive practice relies on clear accountability and collaborative working.

The principal

- Holds overall strategic accountability for inclusion and SEND
- Ensures adequate resources, staffing and oversight are in place.
- Promotes a culture in which inclusion is central to site improvement.

The SENCO
Leads the coordination of SEND provision.

- Oversees the implementation of EHCP processes.
- Supports teachers/tutors and the wider education team in understanding and meeting Learners' needs.

Regional Lead / Proprietor Representative:

- Oversees strategic compliance and the impact of provision.
- Approves and monitors the implementation of this policy.
- Ensures provision is appropriately planned and resourced.

8. Identification of Need

We identify needs using a graduated assess–plan–do–review model. This ensures early recognition of emerging needs and a structured, evidence-based response.

Identification draws on:

Baseline assessments on entry.

- Teacher/tutor observations and daily formative assessment.
- Behaviour, wellbeing and communication screening tools.
- Speech, language and communication assessments.
- Information from previous schools/colleges, social care and health.
- Learner and family voice.
- Specialist assessment (EP, SALT/SLT, OT, CAMHS)

We recognise a broad range of needs, including:

- **SEMH:** emotional regulation, attachment, trauma and anxiety.
- **ASC:** differences in sensory processing, communication and social understanding.
- **Cognition & Learning:** mild learning difficulties.
- **Communication & Interaction:** expressive/receptive differences.
- **Contextual Safeguarding:** vulnerabilities linked to exploitation or risk.

9. Teaching, Learning & Curriculum Adaptations

We deliver adaptive teaching rooted in high expectations. Teachers plan proactively for diverse learning needs and make responsive adjustments to remove barriers.

Adaptations may include:

- Scaffolding, modelling and task chunking.
- Pre-teaching, overlearning and structured repetition.
- Visual timetables, graphic organisers and social stories.
- Sensory strategies, movement breaks and co-regulation approaches.
- Adjustments to cognitive load and ways of recording.
- Targeted literacy and numeracy interventions.
- Assistive technology to support communication and independence.

- Consistent routines, predictable transitions and structured environments.
- Integration of therapeutic strategies into lessons.

Support staff are deployed to:

- Reinforce learning within the classroom.
- Support regulation and relational safety.
- Facilitate communication needs.
- Promote independence and reduce over-reliance.
- Deliver structured interventions.

10. Curriculum Phases & Qualifications

KS1–KS5 and qualification pathways (e.g., GCSE, Functional Skills) must reflect local national frameworks.

11. Curriculum Access

All Learners have the right to access the full curriculum. Where a personalised pathway is required due to an EHCP or specialist advice, this is planned collaboratively, reviewed regularly and designed to ensure progression and ambition remain central.

12. Behaviour, Relationships & Communication

Our approach to behaviour is relational, reflective and trauma-informed. We understand that behaviour communicates emotional and unmet needs, and we respond in ways that prioritise safety and connection.

Our behavioural approach includes:

- Emotion coaching and modelling of self-regulation strategies.
- Restorative conversations and reflective practice.
- De-escalation and co-regulation strategies.
- Sensory-based regulation opportunities.
- Personalised behaviour support plans.
- Reasonable adjustments for **SEND**
- Consistent routines, boundaries and expectations.
- Strengths-based communication and positive reinforcement.

Communication approaches include:

- Simplified, accessible language.
- Visual supports and AAC where needed.
- Strategies tailored to ASC profiles.
- Staff trained to use communication tools confidently.

Freedom of Expression and Respectful Dialogue:

The Forum School is committed to creating an inclusive environment in which pupils, staff and visitors are able to express lawful views, beliefs and opinions in a respectful manner.

We encourage discussion, critical thinking and the exploration of differing perspectives as part of learning and personal development. Pupils will be supported to engage in debate and discussion appropriately, including on sensitive or controversial issues.

Freedom of expression carries responsibilities. The school expects all members of the community to communicate with dignity, respect and consideration for others. Expression of views must not compromise the safety, wellbeing or rights of others.

The school does not tolerate behaviour, language or materials that constitute bullying, harassment, victimisation, discrimination, hate incidents, extremist views, or the encouragement of unlawful activity. Where expression raises safeguarding concerns, the matter will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and Prevent procedures.

In promoting inclusion, the school seeks to balance the right to freedom of expression with its legal duties under safeguarding, equality and education legislation, ensuring that all members of the community feel safe, valued and respected.

The school recognises that pupils may express themselves in different ways due to their age, communication needs, neurodiversity, social, emotional and mental health needs, or disability. Our team will seek to understand the meaning and intent behind communication and behaviour, whilst supporting pupils to develop respectful and socially appropriate ways of expressing their views and feelings.

13. Working with Families & External Agencies

We work in strong partnership with families and carers, valuing the insights they bring. We are committed to regular communication, collaborative decision-making and transparent review processes.

We work with external partners — including social care, therapy services, youth justice and health agencies — to ensure provision is holistic and coordinated. Information is shared in line with **ISS Part 6**

14. Safeguarding Framework & Local Procedures

The Forum School

If you witness or suspect harm **YOU MUST ACT IMMEDIATELY**

Verbally report a concern within ONE HOUR to:

David Horton	Head of Education	**DSL**	07876 771853
Sarah Howe	Assistant Head of Education	**DDSL**	07823 402346
Tracey Wilson	Principal	**DDSL**	07732 600688
Chloe Beevers	Behavioural Support Assistant	**DDSL**	251
Melissa McCarthy	Regional Lead	**DDSL**	07917 048872
If you are unable to contact the above, please contact:			
Kerry Byron	Registered Manager – Woodland View	**DDSL**	07525 29525 07955 105076
Mark Rogers	Registered Manager – Paddocks View	**DDSL**	07525 32629
Hannah Everard	Registered Manager – Riverstone View	**DDSL**	07525 29524
PLEASE NOTE: if there is not ***any*** of the senior management team above present eg **OUT OF HOURS**, then please contact the **SENIOR ON CALL**			
If you are not satisfied or cannot contact any of the above, please contact a more senior manager or director of the company as outlined below:			
Graham Norris	Operations Director of Education		07580 864354
Jeremy Wiles	Group Executive Director – Children's Services		0208 735 6150
LADO Martha Sharp, Laura Taulk and Lynne Bowman. LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Dorset LADO Tel 01305 221122			
Local Child Safeguarding Board Tel Office hours 01305 221196 Out of Hours 01202 65727			
Local Adult Safeguarding Board Tel Office hours 01305 221196 Out of Hours 01202 657279			

If none of the above is immediately available ask for them to be contacted - make it clear that it is a child at risk safeguarding issue and therefore **URGENT.**

Do not confront or report anything to the person you suspect - this could prejudice any enquiry that may follow.

If the person you suspect is on the above list or close to someone on the list go straight to the next person named.

If you are not satisfied or cannot contact any of the above you must inform a more senior manager, a Director of the Company or contact Ofsted/CQC/CIW, local safeguarding board/partners, the police or the Whistleblowing Hotline – on **0800 086 9128.** For further information please refer to Staff Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Handbook.

YOU MUST DO SOMETHING STRAIGHTAWAY AND BE TOTALLY SATISFIED THAT YOU HAVE BEEN TAKEN SERIOUSLY.

15. Data Protection & Information Governance

Data Protection Officer

- Our DPO is contactable via: Russell.Edge@caretech-uk.com
- The company has appointed a Senior Information Risk Officer, Russell Edge. Report any suspicious activity to Russell.Edge@caretech-uk.com

Information Governance

We will continue to take reasonable steps where applicable to prevent malpractice involving the use of data protection and regularly audit our practice

Staff Training

Staff will be kept up to date with developments in data protection and will be able to develop and improve their practice through CPD opportunities and staff training when appropriate.

Training includes:

- Safe internet use and online safeguarding
- Understanding safe sharing of information
- Best practice in data protection and use of technology provided to support this

Breach of Policy

Breaches of policy by staff will be dealt with in line with our staff code of conduct. Disciplinary action may be taken whether the breach occurs:

- During or outside working hours
- On an individual's own device or a school/college device
- At home, at school/college or from a remote working location

Staff must cooperate with any investigation into a suspected breach of this policy.

Breaches must be reported immediately to the principal

16. EHCP - SEND Provision & Outcomes

Learners with **EHCPs** are supported through high-quality classroom practice and targeted provision driven by the outcomes in their statutory plans.

Our approach ensures that:

- Plan outcomes directly shape teaching strategies.
- Provision maps meet statutory expectations.
- Therapeutic interventions (SALT/SLT, OT, counselling, trauma therapy) are integrated.
- Progress towards outcomes is reviewed each term.

- Annual reviews are timely, collaborative and evidence-based.
- Learners' voices contribute meaningfully to decisions.

17. Monitoring Outcomes

We use a range of indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion.

Monitoring includes:

- Academic progress across subjects.
- Emotional regulation and wellbeing.
- Social communication and interaction skills.
- Independence, resilience and self-advocacy.
- Attendance, engagement and participation.
- Safeguarding and contextual risk indicators.

18. Assessment & Multi-Agency Pathways

Universal Assessment Pathway

All pupils receive ongoing assessment through:

- Initial admissions assessments.
- Review of EHCP documentation (where applicable).
- Baseline academic assessments.
- Communication assessments.
- SEMH and wellbeing screening.
- Behaviour and regulation assessments.
- Annual Review processes for pupils with EHCPs.

This is overseen by the class team, SENCO, therapists and senior leaders.

EHCP Assessment Pathway

Stage 1

School gathers evidence:

- SEN Support records.
- Assessments.
- Reports from professionals.
- Parent views.
- Learner views.

Stage 2

Request for:

Education Health and Care Needs Assessment

Submitted to the Local Authority.

Stage 3

Multi-agency advice gathered from:

- Educational Psychology.
- Health professionals.
- Social Care.
- School.
- Parents.
- Young person.

Stage 4

Local Authority decision on EHCP.

Stage 5

EHCP issued and reviewed annually.

Multi-Agency Assessment Pathway

If needs cannot be met through school-based provision alone, referrals may be made to:

Health

School Nursing Service

- Health screening.
- Emotional wellbeing support.
- Physical health concerns. [dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk],

Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)

- Communication assessments.
- Social communication needs.
- AAC recommendations.

Occupational Therapy (OT)

- Sensory assessments.
- Functional skills assessments.
- Environmental recommendations.

CAMHS

- Mental health concerns.
- Anxiety.
- Self-harm.
- Depression.
- Complex emotional needs.

Education

Educational Psychology

- Cognitive assessments.
- Learning profiles.
- Recommendations for provision.
- Consultation and staff advice.

Dorset Learning and Belonging (SEND) Team

- EHCP advice.
- SEND consultation.
- Placement reviews.
- Transition support. [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk]

Social Care

Where safeguarding, family support, disability support or social needs are identified:

- Early Help Assessment.
- Children in Need.
- Child Protection.
- Social Care Assessment.

19. Staff Training & Professional Development

We invest in ongoing CPD to ensure our staff team feel confident and skilled.
Training includes:

- Trauma-informed practice.
- ASC and SEMH strategies.
- Safeguarding including contextual safeguarding (CSE).
- De-escalation and behaviour regulation.
- Communication and interaction strategies.
- National frameworks for SEND and the SEND Code of Practice
- Therapeutic approaches relevant to our Learners.

- A comprehensive induction programme for all new staff.

20. Monitoring, Evaluation & Governance

Leaders evaluate the quality of inclusion using both qualitative and quantitative evidence.

Monitoring includes:

- Learning walks and observation.
- Review of work, plans and provision.
- Data analysis (progress, behaviour, safeguarding).
- Learner, staff and family voice.
- Staff supervision and reflective practice.
- Governance/proprietor oversight
- Findings feed directly into site improvement planning.

Inspection & Regulatory Context

Inclusion is evaluated as part of the site's national inspection and regulatory framework. All local requirements (inspectorate, framework, visit model and applicable quality indicators) are provided in the Regulatory & Legislative Appendix A-C

21. Environment & Accessibility

We work intentionally to ensure our learning environment supports all Learners.

This includes:

- Reasonable adjustments to physical spaces.
- Sensory-friendly environments.
- Safe rooms and therapeutic spaces.
- Individualised risk assessments where needed.

22. Complaints

Complaints relating to **SEND** the site's complaints procedure and any statutory mediation or appeal routes

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix A

Legislation, guidance and regulatory frameworks underpinning Inclusion in England.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

- **Means:** Statutory multi-agency guidance for how agencies work together to help, support and protect children; applies to education providers including FE educating under-18s.
- **Requires:** Align site safeguarding to local partnership procedures and national child protection standards, evidencing effective information sharing and joint working.
- **Our stance:** We follow local safeguarding partnership procedures and evidence leadership oversight.
- **Implementation example:** DSL maintains live referral and strategy-discussion logs aligned to local thresholds, reviewed termly.
- **Links:** GOV.UK – Working together to safeguard children

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025

- **Means:** Statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding and safer recruitment, including FE colleges that educate under-18s.
- **Requires:** All staff read Part 1; DSL role, safer recruitment checks, managing allegations, online safety and a single central record with auditable compliance.
- **Our stance:** We embed KCSIE in induction, supervision and internal audits.
- **Implementation example:** Termly SCR audit, Part-1 completion logs and current DSL training records available for inspection.
- **Links:** GOV.UK – Keeping children safe in education

Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

- **Means:** Ofsted evaluates inclusion through Quality of Education, Behaviour & Attitudes, Personal Development, and Leadership & Management, with safeguarding as a baseline across remits including FE & skills.
- Requires: Evidence of an ambitious, accessible curriculum and adaptive teaching for all Learners (incl. SEND), fair behaviour/attendance, equitable personal development, and leadership oversight securing compliance and impact.
- **Our stance:** We triangulate curriculum access, assessment-led adaptation, participation and outcomes by group, and leadership actions to prove impact.
- **Implementation example:** Compact inspection pack with curriculum maps (SEND access), work/lesson samples (adaptation), attendance/enrichment dashboards by group, and a leadership impact summary.

- **Links:** GOV.UK – Education inspection framework

SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)

- **Means:** Statutory guidance for the SEND system aged 0–25; duties on schools and FE educating under-25s.
- **Requires:** Graduated approach; learner/family participation; SEN Support and EHC plans where required; coordinated work with health and social care.
- **Our stance:** We map plan outcomes to classroom/tutorial practice and review impact termly.
- **Implementation example:** Provision map evidences assess–plan–do–review cycles with learner voice and measured outcomes.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Equality Act 2010

- **Means:** DfE guidance on legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector Equality Duty, for education providers.
- **Requires:** Eliminate discrimination/harassment, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations; apply reasonable adjustments; publish equality information/objectives.
- **Our stance:** We set measurable equality objectives and audit reasonable adjustments across curriculum, support and premises.
- **Implementation example:** Annual equality report analyses outcomes by protected characteristic and informs the site improvement plan.
- **Links:** **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools**

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 — Part 3 *(if independent)*

- **Means:** Legal standards all independent schools must meet; Part 3 covers welfare, health and safety (including safeguarding). *(Not applicable to FE colleges.)*
- **Requires:** Effective safeguarding arrangements, risk assessment and welfare policies, with proprietor oversight and evidence of implementation.
- **Our stance:** Where applicable, we maintain a proprietor compliance log mapped to Part 3 and review termly.
- **Implementation example:** Proprietor receives a safeguarding compliance report summarising audits, incidents and corrective actions.
- **Links:** **https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283**