



**THE BELLBIRD
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**INCLUSION POLICY
2026–27**

Every pupil belongs. Every pupil participates. Every pupil can achieve.

School type	Local authority maintained mainstream primary school
Policy period	September 2026 – August 2027
Approved by	Governing Body: _____
Review date	September 2027 (and annually thereafter)

CARE: Curiosity • Ambition • Respect • Empathy

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out The Bellbird Primary School’s whole-school approach to inclusion. It explains how we identify and remove barriers to learning, participation and belonging; how we provide high-quality universal provision and early targeted support; and how we meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and other additional needs within an inclusive mainstream school.

It should be read alongside the Bellbird Inclusion Strategy 2026–27, which sets the school’s strategic priorities and use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund.

This policy is a whole-school inclusion policy. It does not replace the school’s statutory SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Equality Information and Objectives, or other linked policies.

2. Legislative and guidance framework

This policy has regard to current legislation and guidance, including:

- Children and Families Act 2014, including Part 3 relating to children and young people with SEND.
- Equality Act 2010, including the duty not to discriminate and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance).
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, including requirements relating to SEN information.
- Department for Education (2026), Inclusive Mainstream Fund: best practice for schools and Developing an inclusion strategy using the Inclusive Mainstream Fund.
- Department for Education (2026), Inclusive Mainstream Fund for schools: conditions of grant 2026 to 2027.
- Department for Education (2026), Inclusion bases in schools.
- Department for Education (2026), Inclusive education estates.
- School Admissions Code and relevant admissions legislation.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Improve School Attendance, where inclusion intersects with safeguarding and attendance.

3. Our inclusion statement

At The Bellbird, inclusion is not a separate intervention or the responsibility of one team. It is the way we design teaching, curriculum, routines, relationships, environments and support so that pupils can belong, participate, learn and flourish. We aim to be inclusive by design: anticipating commonly occurring and predictable needs, strengthening ordinarily available provision and responding early when barriers arise.

Our CARE values shape our inclusive practice:

- Curiosity – we seek to understand the child, the barrier and what the pupil’s behaviour, communication or engagement may be telling us.

- **Ambition** – we maintain high expectations and curriculum entitlement for every pupil, including those with SEND and additional needs.
- **Respect** – we recognise difference, dignity and pupil voice, and make reasonable adjustments so that pupils can participate equitably.
- **Empathy** – we respond compassionately and proportionately, working with families and pupils to identify support that helps.

Inclusion does not mean that every pupil must access learning in exactly the same way or in the same environment throughout the whole day. It means thoughtfully adapting provision so that each pupil can access the richest possible mainstream experience, while remaining connected to their class, friendships, curriculum and wider school community.

4. Aims and objectives

- To secure belonging, participation, safety and high achievement for all pupils.
- To provide an ambitious, accessible curriculum through high-quality adaptive teaching.
- To identify barriers and additional needs as early as possible, without waiting unnecessarily for diagnosis or statutory assessment.
- To use the graduated Assess–Plan–Do–Review approach where pupils require support additional to or different from the universal offer.
- To make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and continually improve accessibility.
- To ensure targeted provision supplements rather than replaces strong classroom teaching and preserves curriculum ambition.
- To work in genuine partnership with pupils, parents/carers, the local authority and external professionals.
- To deploy staff, funding and resources transparently and evaluate provision by its impact.
- To ensure staff have appropriate knowledge, skills and professional development to meet the needs of the school’s cohort.
- To ensure governors scrutinise inclusion, SEND provision, statutory compliance, funding and outcomes.

5. Understanding need and barriers

The Bellbird looks beyond labels. SEND may explain why a pupil requires additional or different provision, but it does not define the pupil or limit our ambition. Equally, underachievement, disadvantage, English as an additional language, attendance difficulty or vulnerability do not in themselves mean that a pupil has SEND.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice, staff consider the four broad areas of need:

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

Assessment draws on teacher observation and formative assessment, whole-school assessment information, attendance and behaviour patterns, safeguarding and pastoral information, pupil and parent/carer voice, previous-setting information and, where appropriate, advice from external professionals. We consider how needs interact and how the environment itself may create or reduce barriers.

6. The Bellbird universal inclusive offer

Our universal offer is the entitlement of every pupil and reflects the DfE's seven principles of inclusive mainstream practice.

1. Ambitious leadership and governance

Inclusion is a whole-school priority. Leaders and governors use evidence to understand barriers, scrutinise provision and funding, and ensure inclusion is embedded across curriculum, teaching, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the school environment.

2. Early, evidence-based support

Staff notice emerging need early and respond proportionately. Appropriate adaptations and support do not depend on a formal diagnosis.

3. High-quality adaptive teaching

Teachers retain responsibility for all pupils. Teaching uses explicit instruction, modelling, scaffolding, purposeful practice, checks for understanding, flexible grouping, accessible resources and carefully reduced support to build independence.

4. Enrichment for all

Trips, clubs, sport, arts, outdoor learning, leadership opportunities and the wider life of school are planned so pupils with additional needs can participate as fully as possible.

5. A safe and respectful culture

CARE values, safeguarding, restorative practice and an explicitly taught behaviour curriculum promote dignity, belonging, attendance and participation. High expectations are maintained alongside lawful and proportionate reasonable adjustments.

6. Strong family and service partnerships

Parents/carers and pupils are listened to early and involved in planning and review. The school works constructively with education, health, social care, Early Help and specialist services.

7. Inclusive environments

Classrooms and shared spaces are reviewed for physical, sensory, communication and organisational barriers. Visual supports, predictable routines, accessible technology, calm spaces and regulation resources are used where they improve access.

7. The Starling Room – inclusive provision within The Bellbird

We recognise that, for some pupils, the sensory, social and cognitive demands of a busy mainstream classroom can at times become overwhelming and create a barrier to successful learning. The Starling Room has therefore been carefully developed as an integral part of Bellbird’s inclusive mainstream provision.

The Starling Room is a calm, nurturing and thoughtfully designed environment with sensory and regulation resources. It gives pupils space to regulate, feel secure and develop the readiness and headspace needed to engage successfully with learning. It is not a punishment space or a separate school provision.

Use is flexible and responsive to individual need. For some pupils it may be a temporary or short period during the day before returning to class; for others with more significant or sustained needs it may form a more regular and structured part of their individual provision. In every case, the purpose, intended outcomes and level of access are considered carefully and reviewed.

- Pupils accessing the Starling Room remain fully part of their class, year group and the wider Bellbird community.
- Provision is based on identified need, pupil voice and, where appropriate, discussion with parents/carers and professionals.
- Time in the Starling Room is purposeful and may support regulation, communication and interaction, pastoral needs, pre-teaching, targeted learning, independence or planned reintegration.
- Staff seek to maximise access to the mainstream classroom, curriculum, friendships, enrichment and wider school life.
- Where a pupil has an EHC plan, provision is consistent with the plan and considered within the pupil’s wider SEND provision.
- The school will review the effectiveness, proportionality and impact of Starling Room provision and avoid unnecessary separation from peers or curriculum.

Rather than expecting every child to fit one model of provision, Bellbird seeks to understand the individual pupil, identify the barriers they experience and adapt the environment and support so that they can belong, participate, learn and flourish.

8. Graduated response: Assess – Plan – Do – Review

Where high-quality universal provision and appropriate classroom adaptations do not sufficiently remove barriers, the school uses the graduated response described in the SEND Code of Practice. Support is matched to need and reviewed for impact.

ASSESS	PLAN	DO	REVIEW
Identify strengths, needs and barriers using assessment, observation, pupil/family voice and	Agree outcomes, adjustments or interventions, responsibility, frequency and a review	Class teachers retain oversight. Agreed provision is delivered with fidelity and linked	Evaluate progress, impact and pupil experience. Continue, adapt, step up or step

relevant professional advice.	point. Record additional/different SEN provision appropriately.	to classroom learning wherever possible.	down support on the basis of evidence.
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9. SEN Support and Education, Health and Care Plans

A pupil will be identified as requiring SEN Support where they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision which is additional to or different from that made generally for pupils of the same age. Identification is based on evidence and professional judgement, not simply attainment level.

- The school records and reviews SEN Support through its agreed graduated-response and provision-management systems.
- Parents/carers and pupils are involved in planning and review, with information presented accessibly.
- Where progress remains a significant concern despite relevant and purposeful action, the school will consider seeking further specialist advice and, where appropriate, requesting an EHC needs assessment.
- Pupils with an EHC plan receive the provision specified in the plan. The school participates fully in statutory annual review arrangements and plans carefully for transition.
- Teachers remain responsible for the progress and development of pupils with SEND, including where pupils receive support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

10. Curriculum access and targeted provision

Targeted support is selected because it addresses an identified barrier and has a clear intended outcome. It should be evidence-informed, time-efficient and connected to the pupil's classroom curriculum. Withdrawal from class is used thoughtfully so that the benefit of additional provision outweighs any loss of curriculum, peer interaction or belonging.

- Adaptive teaching and reasonable adjustments within lessons.
- Pre-teaching, overlearning and carefully planned additional practice.
- Small-group or individual evidence-based interventions.
- Communication and interaction support, including visual and language scaffolds.
- Pastoral, regulation and social-emotional support.
- Assistive technology and accessible resources.
- Specialist advice or intervention where required.
- Starling Room provision where this is the appropriate response to the pupil's identified needs.

11. English as an additional language (EAL)

Having English as an additional language is not, in itself, a special educational need. Bellbird values linguistic and cultural diversity and maintains high expectations for pupils learning English as an additional language. Assessment considers the pupil's proficiency in English, previous educational

experience and learning in the first language where relevant, so that language acquisition is not confused with SEND.

- Pupils with EAL have full access to mainstream curriculum provision.
- Teachers maintain cognitive challenge while reducing unnecessary linguistic barriers through modelling, visuals, explicit vocabulary, structured talk and pre-teaching where helpful.
- Translation or interpreting support is considered where necessary to enable equitable communication with families.
- Where SEND is suspected, the school gathers evidence carefully and, where possible, considers information about the pupil's development and learning across languages.

12. Children in care and previously looked-after children

The school recognises that children in care and previously looked-after children may face additional barriers arising from disrupted education, trauma, attachment, loss or other experiences. The Designated Teacher works with the Virtual School Head, social workers, carers, families and other professionals as appropriate to promote educational achievement, attendance, wellbeing and inclusion.

- Personal Education Plans are used effectively for children in care and reviewed in line with statutory requirements.
- Pupil Premium Plus and other resources are used purposefully to support agreed outcomes.
- Transitions, safeguarding, attendance and the interaction between SEND and care experience are considered carefully.
- The Designated Teacher and SENDCo work together where a pupil is both in care/previously looked after and has SEND.

13. Behaviour, attendance and safeguarding

Inclusion does not mean lowering expectations. It means teaching expectations explicitly, applying them fairly, understanding barriers and making lawful, proportionate adjustments. Behaviour may communicate an unmet need, but this is considered alongside safety, accountability, the needs of others and the school's behaviour policy.

- Patterns of dysregulation, withdrawal, absence, repeated sanction or lost learning prompt consideration of underlying barriers and additional support.
- Attendance concerns are addressed early and SEND, disability, medical, pastoral and safeguarding factors are considered when agreeing support.
- Suspension and permanent exclusion decisions follow current statutory guidance, including consideration of SEND, disability and reasonable adjustments.
- Safeguarding always takes precedence. Staff follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.
- Any reduced or alternative arrangements are exceptional, purposeful, time-limited, reviewed regularly and focused on full educational entitlement and reintegration.

14. Partnership with parents/carers and pupils

Effective inclusion depends on strong partnership. The Bellbird seeks to communicate early, respectfully and in a solution-focused way, recognising that pupils and families hold important knowledge about strengths, barriers and successful strategies.

- Parents/carers are encouraged to raise concerns early and are involved in significant decisions about support.
- Pupils are supported to express what helps them learn, what creates barriers and what outcomes matter to them.
- Parents/carers and pupils are involved in Assess–Plan–Do–Review processes where applicable.
- Information is provided in an accessible format and translation/interpreting support is considered where necessary.
- The school signposts families to the SEND Information Report, Cambridgeshire Local Offer and SEND Information, Advice and Support Service as appropriate.

15. Effective transition

- Information is gathered promptly from previous settings and shared appropriately with receiving staff.
- Enhanced transition is planned for pupils who need additional visits, visual information, transition books, meetings or familiarisation.
- For pupils with SEND, transition planning is incorporated into APDR and EHC plan review processes as appropriate.
- Year 6 transition is planned early with receiving secondary schools and relevant professionals, with pupils and parents/carers involved.
- Transitions within The Bellbird, including between year groups and changes in provision, are planned with the same care as external transitions.

16. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	Ensures statutory duties are met; scrutinises the Inclusion Strategy, SEND provision, accessibility, equality, use of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund and outcomes; provides support and challenge.
Headteacher	Has overall responsibility for the school's inclusive culture, strategic direction and educational provision, and ensures inclusion is embedded across school improvement, curriculum, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, staffing and resources.

SENDCo / Inclusion leadership

Oversees day-to-day implementation of SEND arrangements; coordinates provision; supports and advises colleagues; oversees APDR and records; liaises with pupils, families, governors, the local authority and external professionals; contributes to staff development and strategic evaluation.

Designated Teacher for children in care and previously looked-after children

Promotes educational achievement and ensures appropriate liaison with the Virtual School, social care, carers/families and school leaders.

Class teachers

Are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of every pupil in their class; provide high-quality adaptive teaching; identify emerging barriers; implement agreed adjustments and interventions; and work with families, the SENDCo and support staff.

Teaching assistants and support staff

Implement agreed provision skilfully under teacher direction, promote independence, contribute observations and feedback, and uphold pupils' dignity, belonging and curriculum access.

All staff

Share responsibility for noticing barriers, implementing agreed adjustments, maintaining high expectations, safeguarding pupils and contributing to an inclusive culture.

17. Staff expertise, resources and funding

The school develops staff expertise in response to the needs of its cohort and its improvement priorities. Leaders use professional development, coaching, specialist advice and collaboration with local services to strengthen inclusive practice.

- Core funding, including the notional SEN budget, is used alongside other relevant funding to meet needs and strengthen ordinarily available provision.
- The Inclusive Mainstream Fund is used in accordance with current grant conditions to strengthen universal provision and early evidence-based targeted support.
- Specialist equipment, technology or expertise is secured where evidence shows it is needed, with regard to value for money and sustainability.
- Deployment of teaching assistants is planned to add value to teacher-led provision and promote pupil independence rather than unnecessary adult dependency.
- Provision and interventions are evaluated for impact, not simply for whether they were delivered.

18. Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of inclusion is evaluated through a range of evidence, including:

- Attainment and progress, including for pupils with SEND and other additional needs.
- Attendance, persistent absence and successful reintegration.
- Behaviour, suspensions, repeated incidents and lost learning.
- Pupil work, classroom observation and learning walks focused on accessibility and adaptive teaching.
- APDR quality and the impact of interventions and reasonable adjustments.
- Pupil belonging, participation, wellbeing, independence and access to enrichment.
- Parent/carers and pupil voice.
- Staff confidence and professional development.
- Starling Room access, intended outcomes, curriculum connection and reintegration.
- Use and impact of inclusion funding, including the Inclusive Mainstream Fund.

19. Admissions and equality

Admissions are managed in accordance with the law, the School Admissions Code and the school's published admission arrangements. The school will not discriminate unlawfully on the basis of disability, race, language or another protected characteristic. Where The Bellbird is named in a child's EHC plan following the statutory process, the relevant legal duties apply. The school makes reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and works to improve accessibility.

20. Complaints

Concerns about inclusion or SEND provision should normally be raised first with the class teacher and/or SENDCo so that they can be resolved promptly. Where a concern remains unresolved, parents/carers should follow the school's Complaints Policy. Complaints about EHC plan decisions or local-authority functions may be subject to separate statutory routes.

21. Links with other policies and information

- The Bellbird Inclusion Strategy 2026–27
- SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy
- Admissions arrangements
- Complaints Policy
- Intimate Care Policy and other relevant pastoral/safeguarding procedures

22. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there is a significant change to legislation, statutory guidance or school provision. The Governing Body will approve the policy and scrutinise its implementation alongside the school's annual Inclusion Strategy.