



Great Torrington School

THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY 2025-26

Approving Committee: **Full Governing Body**
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 Staff Sponsor: **HVW [INCO]**
 Date of the next review of the Policy Document: **Summer Term 2026**
 Governor with SEND responsibilities: **Lesley Wall**
 Placed on shared drive: Y
 Placed on website: ~~Y~~N

Context

This policy was developed in consultation with parents/carers, staff and pupils of the school community and the governing body and pays due regard to:

- The SEND Code of Practice : 0 to 25 years, July 2014
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations
- The Equality Act 2010

Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

This policy is in line with our Teaching and Learning Policy and Equal Opportunities Policy and aims to support inclusion for all of our children and young people. The responsibility for the management of this policy falls to the Headteacher; the day-to-day operation of the policy is the responsibility of the Individual Needs Co-ordinator (INCO). The Governing Body, Headteacher and INCO will work together closely to ensure that this policy is working effectively.

Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision is that which is scaffolded to meet the needs of the majority of pupils. Some pupils will need something **additional to** and **different from** what is provided for the majority of pupils; this is special educational provision and we will use our best endeavours to ensure that provision is made for those who need it. [Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision - Support for schools and settings](#)

Great Torrington School will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs or disabilities. We will ensure that all staff in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities to allow pupils with SEND to join the activities of the school.

The staff and governors of Great Torrington School will also work to ensure that all SEND pupils reach their full potential, are fully included within the school community and are able to make successful transfers between educational establishments. This policy aims to support all members of staff in providing positive whole school approaches towards the learning, progress and achievement of SEND pupils. With this as an underlying principle, we believe that:

All teachers are teachers of Special Educational Needs

Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class.

Teaching and supporting pupils with SEND is therefore a whole school responsibility requiring a whole school response. Meeting the needs of pupils with SEND requires partnership working between all those involved – local authority (LA), school, parents/carers, pupils, children's services and other agencies.

School Admission

No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need where Great Torrington school can make reasonable adjustments necessary to meet their individual needs, and where this is compatible to the progress of the pupil and others. In line with the Equality Act 2010 we do not discriminate against disabled young people in respect of admission for a reason related to their disability. We will use our best endeavours to provide effective educational provision.

Aims and Objectives

Aims

To provide the structure for a pupil-centred process that engages pupils, family, school and other professionals in planning for and implementing high quality, needs led provision that is consistent across the school. This is to ensure all of our pupils are able to access equal opportunities for learning and social development achieving maximum progress, fulfilling their potential and promoting their well-being.

Objectives

The SEND Policy reflects the principles of the 0 – 25 SEND Code of Practice (2014). The aims of this special educational policy are:

- To ensure the Equality Act duties for pupils with disabilities are met
- To enable pupils with special educational needs to have their needs met
- To take into account the views of the pupils with special educational needs
- To encourage good communication and genuine partnerships with parents/carers of children and young people with special educational needs
- To facilitate full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, including an appropriate curriculum for pupils with special educational needs
- To make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions in conjunction with the Medical Policy and to have regard to statutory guidance supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- To implement a graduated approach to meeting the needs of pupils using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review process
- To develop a culture of inclusion, with teachers using all TLAC strategies as well as a range of effective teaching methods aligned with OAIP
- To employ a collaborative approach with learners with a SEN or disability, their families, staff within school and other external agencies including those from Health and Social Care
- To set appropriate individual learning outcomes based on prior attainment, high aspirations and the views of the learner and family
- To share expertise and good practice across the school and local learning community
- To make efficient and effective use of school resources
- To have regard to the Code of Practice (2014) for the identification, assessment, support and review of special educational needs
- To have regard to guidance detailed by Devon County Council.

Identifying and Supporting Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Definition of SEND

Pupils have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them, namely provision which is **additional**

to or different from that normally available in an inclusive curriculum. We regard pupils as having a Special Educational Need if they:

- (a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, or;
- (b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions
- (c) A child under compulsory age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition of (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

Pupils must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Great Torrington School will have regard to the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEND and will ensure that parents/carers are informed by the school that SEND provision is being made for their child.

There may be times in a pupil's school career when they are identified as having a Special Educational Need. These pupils will be provided with intervention and/or support that is "additional to or different from" the normal curriculum. This may be on an on-going basis or for a limited time.

Many pupils with sensory and/or physical disabilities may require adaptations, made as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Areas of Special Educational Need

Under the SEND Code of Practice 2014, pupils identified as having special educational need (SEN) are considered within one or more of the following categories of need:

Cognition and Learning

Children and young people with learning needs may learn at a different pace than others and may have difficulty developing literacy or numeracy skills or understanding new concepts. Learning needs may be in addition to or as a result of other special educational needs.

Children and young people with a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) may have experienced problems related to one or more of these: dyslexia (reading and spelling); dysgraphia (writing); dyscalculia (maths); development coordination disorder

Learning difficulties covers a very wide range of needs which include moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) where children and young people are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with communication and mobility, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where they are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties, as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. Cognition and learning needs include:

- Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)

- Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)
- Severe learning difficulties (SLD)
- Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained.

Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties include:

- ADD
- ADHD
- Attachment disorder

Communication and Interaction Needs

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or because they do not understand or use social rules of communication.

Every child and young person with SLCN presents differently and the nature and impact of their needs may change over time. Children with autism spectrum disorder are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Communication and interaction needs include:

- Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)

Sensory and/or Physical Needs

Some children require special educational provision because they have a sensory and/or physical disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age-related and may fluctuate over time.

Children and young people with a visual (VI), hearing (HI) or multi-sensory (MSI) impairment may well require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning. Children with MSI have a combination of visual and hearing difficulties. Some children with physical disabilities (PD) require additional on-going support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers. Sensory and/or physical needs include:

- Visual impairment (VI)
- Hearing impairment (HI) – including deaf and hearing impairment
- Multi-sensory impairment (MSI sometimes referred to as Deafblind)
- Physical disability (PD)

A Graduated Approach to SEND

Early concerns

The progress made by all pupils is regularly monitored and reviewed. Initially, concerns registered by teachers, parents/carers or other agencies are addressed by appropriate initial strategies within the classroom aligned to the Devon OAIP and a record is kept. This starts the Graduated Approach Process.

How we identify and support pupils with SEND

All pupils' attainment and achievements are monitored by the teacher who is required to provide well planned quality learning opportunities scaffolded appropriately for individual pupils. Where a pupil is making inadequate progress or falls behind their peers, additional support will be provided under the guidance of the subject/class teacher through guidance from OAIP. Adequate progress could:

- Be similar to that of their peers
- Match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress
- Close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- Prevent the attainment gap growing wider.

Where pupils continue to make inadequate progress despite all OAIP implementations the subject/class teacher will work with the pupil's Head of Learning and school's Individual Needs Co-Ordinator (INCO) to assess if a pupil has a significant learning difficulty and agree appropriate support through targeted support.

In some cases it may be necessary to seek assessment by, or advice from, an external professional. This will always involve discussion and agreement with the pupil's parents/carers. When considering whether a pupil has a special educational need, any of the following may be evident:

- Makes little or no progress even when all reasonable adjustments are implemented.
- Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in attainment concerns in some curriculum areas

- Persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by appropriate reasonable adjustments
- Has sensory or physical problems despite the provision of specialist equipment
- Has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of an appropriate curriculum
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the pupil's own learning or that of the class groups, despite having an individualised behaviour support plan and all reasonable adjustments in place
- Has SEND or physical needs that require additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- Has a communication and/or an interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and causes a substantial barrier to learning.

Assess, Plan, Do and Review

SEN support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach – assess, plan, do, review.

Assess

The subject/class teachers, working with the Head of Learning and INCO, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw upon the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information gathered from other areas of the school e.g. behaviour logs, attendance, pastoral meetings etc. Primary school liaison notes and information passed between schools during mid-term/year transfer may also prove useful here.

The pupil's development in comparison to their peers and national data should also be considered, along with parent/ carers views, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, information from other external support services. These should all be recorded on a school-based plan. Where outside agencies are also involved the Early Help assessment and associated process will usually need to be drawn on in addition to this.

This assessment should be reviewed regularly to ensure that support strategies and intervention are matched to need and barriers to learning are identified and overcome. There will then be a clear picture of the adjustments put in place and their impact can be duly monitored and developed. For some types of SEN, the way in which a pupil responds to an adjustment can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need.

Plan

Parents/carers must be formally notified (if they are not already aware of their child's SEND) when their child is to be provided with targeted support and invited to a meeting where school-based professionals can decide on the interventions and support to be put in place, as

well as the expected impact on progress and development. This will be recorded in a school-based plan. A date for review should be set which will reflect the level of need present.

The plans will be shared with and implemented by relevant staff.

The plan agreed will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness and will be undertaken by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge.

Where appropriate, plans will seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

Do

The subject/class teacher remains responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis and will work closely with Devon OAIP, learning support assistants or specialist staff involved to plan and assess the impact of support and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The Head of Learning and INCO will support the subject teacher in further assessment of the pupil's needs, in problem-solving and advising on the effective implementation of support as a part of the graduated approach.

Review

On the agreed date, the school-based plan will be reviewed to evaluate the impact and quality of the support provided. The views of both parents/carers and the pupil will form an integral part of this review and both will be involved in planning the next steps. Other agencies may, where appropriate, also attend this review.

The aim of the review is to feedback into the analysis of the pupil's needs so that the subject/class teacher, working with the INCO or other school-based professionals, can revise the support in the light of the pupil's progress and development. All decisions regarding changes will be made in consultation with parents/carers and the pupil.

Where there is a sustained period of insufficient or no progress, the school may decide to gain involvement and advice from a specialist or external agency. The school will consult with the parents/carers before making this step.

Exit Criteria

When a pupil has made sufficient progress in their area of need so that they no longer require any provision which is different from or additional to that which is normally available as part of high quality teaching, they will no longer be seen as requiring SEN support. At this point,

following discussion and agreement with parents/carers, the pupil will be removed from the school's SEND database.

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHC Plan)

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the needs of an individual, the pupil has not made progress and the gap between that pupil and their peers continues to widen, the school or the parents/carers should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. All the evidence gathered through regular reviews of school plans, as well as evidence from relevant outside agencies will help the local authority decide whether a statutory assessment of need is required.

If a statutory EHC plan is drawn up, the local authority will request the school's help in reviewing the plan every 12 months. The INCO will be asked to hold the annual review and submit the required paperwork to the local authority.

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

Regular monitoring of the quality of provision for all pupils, including those with SEND follows the school's assessment and monitoring calendar. In addition, the Assess, Plan, Do and Review ensures that pupils with SEND have their individual provision reviewed regularly, and at least termly. Additional training, advice and support will be provided to all where necessary in order to facilitate pupil progress and to meet pupil needs.

Supporting Pupils and Families

We value and accept the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with parents/carers, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified properly and met as early as possible.

At Great Torrington School we endeavour to support parents/carers so that they are able to:

- Feel fully supported and taken seriously should they raise a concern about their child
- Recognise and fulfil their responsibilities and play an active and valued role in their child's education
- Understand procedures and documentation
- Make their views known about how their child is educated
- Have access to information, advice and support during assessment and any related decision-making process about special education provision.

The INCO is happy to meet with parents/carers at any time by prior arrangement. Parents/carers are encouraged to seek help and advice from Independent Information Advice and Support Services, including DIAS: Devon Information Advice and Support Service. These are able to provide important and independent advice, support and information on special educational needs and disabilities.

Parents/carers are also encouraged to visit the Devon County Council Local Office website www.devon.gov.uk/send. This website provides valuable information about different agencies, services and resources for children, young people with SEND and their families in addition to school resources and information.

Children in Care

When a child is in care, the carers are accorded the same rights and responsibilities as parents. The school has a designated teacher for Looked after Children and Previously Looked After Children, Mrs Helen Whiterod (Assistant Head: INCO).

Pupil Voice

We hold the views of pupils highly and recognise the importance of gaining genuine pupil views in promoting the best pupil outcomes. Pupils are able to share their views in a number of different ways (appropriate to age and ability). These views are welcome at any time but are specifically sought as part of their Annual Review when reviewing “Pupil Information Passports”, and during the review process of the graduated approach. We ask all pupils to contribute to the setting of their own outcomes and targets.

Partnership with Outside Agencies

We strive to engage with positive working partnerships with outside agencies. The school’s SEN Information Report details which agencies the school has worked with in the last 12 months. This report can be found on the school website and is up-dated annually.

Transition

A change of school, class and staff can be an exciting, yet anxious time for all pupils. We recognise that this can be very challenging for some pupils with SEND. We endeavour to make sure these periods of change are carefully managed in a sensitive way to provide continuity of high quality provision and reassurance to pupils and family. Our processes for transition are explained further in the SEN Information Report on the school website.

Training and Resources

Allocation of resources

- Each year we map our provision to the needs of the pupils in our school. This is regularly reviewed and can change during the academic year.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Special Educational Needs

- The INCO and other SLT members provide regular CPD to other staff in school in specific aspects of meeting the needs of pupils with SEN.
- All staff have regular CPD training. With the focus on high quality first teaching. This will also include specific training on SEND issues.
- Learning Support Assistants are engaged in an on-going training whereby the role of the learning support assistant is developed
- External trainers are brought in periodically to address more specialist training needs such as dealing with specific medical conditions (e.g. epilepsy) or to train staff in the use of specific interventions
- Peer support and guidance is available daily for all staff in school and some of the best training development occurs through professional dialogue with colleagues looking at meeting the specific needs of a pupil.

Funding

Funding for SEND in mainstream schools is mainly delegated to the school's budget. It is the expectation that schools will provide support to their pupils with SEND from their SEND budget. Where a pupil requires an exceptionally high level of support that incurs a greater expense this is only accessible to those pupils who already have an Education Health Care Plan.

Element 2 funding is a budget received by school to support the needs of pupils with SEND, this funding is not allocated to individuals. It is used to fund IN SCHOOL provisions. This funding CANNOT be used for allocated 1:1 staffing or commissioning external services. If this level of support is required for any young person, it will be supported and funded through an EHCP and level 3 funding.

At GTS level 2 funding provides the following:

- Purchasing of specialised equipment or resources as required
- Providing whole class support of a Learning Support Assistant (1:25) if required and as available
- Hardy Centre Provision (staffing, resources, and environment)
- Small group interventions (academic intervention, learning outside the classroom, social skills)
- Role of Home School Liaison Link
- Role of Specialised Learning Assistants

- Role of Specialist Communicator (Hi and VI)
- Role of INCo and admin associate
- Supported learning classes
- Supported school visits including extended transition

Personal Budgets

Personal Budgets are only available to pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or pupils who are currently under-going a needs assessment for an EHCP. Funding can be made available to parents/carers as a personal budget for them to commission their own provision for their child under certain conditions. This is accessed through a RAS (Resource Allocation on System).

Parents/carers who would like to enquire further about using the personal budget should seek advice

[Personal education budgets - Children, families and education](#)

Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the Governing Body, Headteacher and INCO, all members of staff have important responsibilities.

Governing Body:

The Governing Body endeavours to follow the guidelines as laid down in the SEND Code of Practice (2014) to:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need – this means doing everything they can to meet children and young people's Special Educational Needs
- Ensure that children and young people with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEN.
- Designate a teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision - the Individual Needs Co-ordinator, or INCO.
- Inform parents/carers when they are making special educational provision for a child
- Prepare an annual SEN information report and their arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and their accessibility plan showing how they plan to improve access progressively over time.

Headteacher:

The Headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for children with special educational needs. The Headteacher will keep the Governing Body fully informed on Special Educational Needs issues. The Headteacher will work closely with the INCO and the Governor with responsibility for SEND.

INCO

In collaboration with the Headteacher and Governing Body, the INCO determines the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision with the ultimate aim of raising the achievement of pupils with SEND.

The INCO takes day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy supported by other school-based professionals and co-ordinates the provision for individual pupils, working closely with staff, parents/carers and external agencies. The INCO provides relevant professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high-quality teaching for pupils with special educational needs.

Through analysis and assessment of pupils' needs, and by monitoring the quality of teaching and standards of pupils' achievements and setting targets, the INCO develops effective ways of overcoming barriers to learning and sustaining effective teaching aligned with Devon OAIP.

The INCO liaises and collaborates with subject/class teachers so that learning for all children is given equal priority.

The principle responsibilities for the INCO include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy alongside other school-based professionals
- Co-ordinating provision for SEND pupils and reporting on progress
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support – Assess, Plan, Do, Review
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Monitoring relevant SEND CPD for all staff
- Overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs and ensuring they are up-to-date
- Liaising with parents/carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Being a point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies

- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- Monitoring the impact of interventions provided for pupils with SEND
- To lead on the development of high quality SEND provision as an integral part of the school improvement plan
- Working with the Headteacher and the school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

All Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff:

- All staff are aware of the school's SEND policy and the procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with special educational needs
- Subject/class teachers are responsible for implementation OAIP, scaffolded for individual pupils. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, their understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered
- Subject/class teachers are responsible for setting suitable learning challenges and facilitating effective special educational provision in response to pupils' diverse needs in order to remove potential barriers to learning. This process should include working with the INCO and other school-based professionals to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, drawing on the teacher's assessment of the pupil as well as previous progress and attainment and accessing support and guidance through Devon OAIP.
- Learning Support Assistants will liaise with the class teacher and INCO on planning, on pupil response and on progress in order to contribute effectively to the graduated approach (assess, plan, do, and review).

Meeting Medical Needs

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will specify the type and level of support required to meet the medical needs of such pupils.

Where children and young people also have SEND, their provision should be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way. For those pupils with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan this will be used as it brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision.

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. ***Please see the school's Medical Policy for further details.***

Children in Hospital

The member of staff responsible for ensuring that pupils with health needs have appropriate access to education will liaise with other agencies and professionals, as well as parents/carers, to ensure good communication and effective sharing of information. This will enable optimum opportunities for educational progress and achievement.

SEN Information Report

The school will ensure that the SEN information report is accessible on the school website. Governors have a legal duty to publish information on their websites about the implementation of the policy for pupils with SEND. The information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible. The SEND information report can be found on the school website.

Monitoring and Accountability

Accessibility

The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and Accessibility legislation. Most areas of the school are accessible for wheelchair users and it has disabled toilet facilities. Great Torrington School staff work hard to develop their accessibility and the school's accessibility plan detailing how this is being developed can be accessed from the school website.

Storing and Managing Information

Pupil SEND records will be kept in accordance with the school's Data Retention Policy.

Responding to Complaints

In the first instance, parent complaints about the provision or organisation of SEND are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the School's Complaints Policy.

If there continues to be disagreement with regard to SEND provision the Local Authority should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons with a view to avoiding or resolving disagreements between the parents/carers and the school. This includes access to mediation before tribunal. Parents/carers have a right to appeal to a SEND tribunal at any stage.

This policy is due to be reviewed annually.

INCO Qualification: Mrs Helen Whiterod BEd, National Award for SEN Co-ordination, NPQH