

Rugby Free Secondary School – SEND Report

Overview Sheet 2025-26

What is SEND?

SEND students (students with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) are defined as being *'young people who have a form of need or disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities and provision of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.'* Typically, a child or young person has special educational needs and disabilities if they have a learning difficulty and/or a disability that means they require additional special health and education support.

The SEND Code of Practice groups needs into four broad areas to support schools to plan the provision that they offer:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Social, Emotional, and Mental Health
- Sensory & Physical Needs

SEND at RFSS (Context):

We currently have 301 students classified as being on the SEND Register (including EHCP), which accounts for 25.7% of the overall Year 7 – Year 13 cohort. However, we have a deep understanding of our families and community and are aware that we have an additional number of students who also face significant barriers and challenges. We also have a Specialist Resource Provision, which hosts twenty SEND students who require additional support around their Communication & Interaction needs. In September 2025 we opened a Specialist Resource Provision; to support students with SEMH needs, this will support 8 students.

The most common SEND needs on the register at Rugby Free Secondary School are as follows:

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties – 28.9%
- Communication and Interaction – 44.3%
- Cognition and Learning – 21%
- Sensory or Physical needs – 5.8%

As outlined by Warwickshire SENDAR, we are currently the most popular school of choice for SEND students, parents and carers, which is something we are extremely proud of.

The percentage of students who have additional SEND needs is higher than the national average and the Warwickshire average, and the number of students with EHCPs is also higher than both the national and Warwickshire averages.

Key SEND numbers can be seen below:

	SEND Number	Total Year Number	SEND Percentage
Year 7	44	181	14.5%
Year 8	68	181	22.4%
Year 9	78	210	25.7%
Year 10	50	182	16.4%
Year 11	32	149	10.5%

Additionally, there are some students in Year 12 and Year 13 who are in receipt of SEND support. Please see below for figures:

	SEND Number	Total Year Number	SEND Percentage
Year 12	19	166	6.3%
Year 13	13	101	4.3%

The significant quantity of SEND students at RFSS, means that much like the provision for Pupil Premium students, strategies have to be interwoven through quality-first provision for all, not just bolt-ons for specific sub-groups.

The numbers for each of these sub-groups are below:

	SEND K	EHCP	Boys & SEND	Girls & SEND
Overall	232	75	187	120
Year 7	33	11	29	16
Year 8	44	24	50	18
Year 9	53	25	48	30
Year 10	42	8	25	25
Year 11	28	4	16	16
Year 12	19	2	12	9
Year 13	13	0	7	6

SEND & EEF Research:

'Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) have the greatest need for excellent teaching and are entitled to provision that supports achievement at, and enjoyment of, school. The attainment gap between pupils with SEND and their peers is twice as big as the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers.'

'The term 'SEND' is used throughout the research in order to be inclusive of all pupils with these needs and in recognition of the fact that a disability will often overlap with special educational needs. However, this report is about special educational needs and provision rather than any adaptations schools may need to make for pupils with a physical disability or a long-term health condition. The focus is on improving the quality of teaching and learning in mainstream classrooms and ensuring pupils are full members of the school community who have a rich and positive experience.'

In short, the EEF recommends five key pillars for effective SEND provision in mainstream schools:

- 1. Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception**
- 2. Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs**
- 3. Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching**
- 4. Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions**
- 5. Work effectively with teaching assistants**

Pillar 1: Create a positive and supportive environment for all pupils, without exception

An inclusive school removes barriers to learning and participation, provides an education that is appropriate to pupils' needs, and promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential for all pupils. Schools should:

- Promote positive relationships, active engagement, and wellbeing for all pupils
- Ensure all pupils can access the best possible teaching
- Adopt a positive and proactive approach to behaviour, as described in the EEF's Improving Behaviour in Schools guidance report

What we do at Rugby Free Secondary School in relation to this pillar:

- Sharing of Student-Centered Profiles
- Assistant Headteacher part of Quality of Education Team
- SEND play an active role in CPD to support Quality first Teaching for SEND students
- Trauma Informed Approach
- Social Communication Interventions
- Social Stories
- Mentoring

Pillar 2: Build an ongoing, holistic understanding of your pupils and their needs

- Schools should aim to understand individual pupil's learning needs using the graduated approach of the 'assess, plan, do, review' approach
- Assessment should be regular and purposeful rather than a one-off event, and should seek input from parents and carers as well as the pupil themselves and specialist professionals
- Teachers need to feel empowered and trusted to use the information they collect to make a decision about the next steps for teaching that child.

What we do at Rugby Free Secondary School in relation to this pillar:

- Sharing of Student-Centered Profile
- Use of Edukey to monitor and record our graduated approach
- Range of assessment tools and screeners to meet individual needs/concerns
- Regular use of round robins to capture teacher voice
- Weekly/Fortnightly Key worker check-ins

Pillar 3: Ensure all pupils have access to high quality teaching.

- To a great extent, good teaching for pupils with SEND is good teaching for all
- Searching for a 'magic bullet' can distract teachers from the powerful strategies they often already possess
- The research suggests a group of teaching strategies that teachers should consider emphasising for pupils with SEND. Teachers should develop a repertoire of these strategies they can use flexibly in response to the needs of all pupils. — flexible grouping; — cognitive and metacognitive strategies; — explicit instruction; — using technology to support pupils with SEND; and — scaffolding.

What we do at Rugby Free Secondary School in relation to this pillar:

- Sharing of Student-Centered Profiles
- Active sharing of information and strategies at weekly spotlight meetings
- SEND department play an active role in teaching staff CPD
- Bespoke CPD for LSAs

Pillar 4: Complement high quality teaching with carefully selected small-group and one-to-one interventions

- Small-group and one-to-one interventions can be a powerful tool but must be used carefully. Ineffective use of interventions can create a barrier to the inclusion of pupils with SEND
- High quality teaching should reduce the need for extra support, but it is likely that some pupils will require high quality, structured, targeted interventions to make progress
- The intensity of intervention (from universal to targeted to specialist) should increase with need.
- Interventions should be carefully targeted through identification and assessment of need.

What we do at Rugby Free Secondary School in relation to this pillar:

- Graduated intervention offer for 2025-2026 (please see our website)
- Accurate baseline and exit data for interventions to assess impact regularly
- Designated Intervention Manager part of SEND Leadership Team
- Quality Assurance of Interventions
- Use of evidence informed interventions, delivered to a high standard

- SEND Learning Walk Focus
- Assistant Headteacher part of the Quality of Education team
- Targeted CPD for staff based on presented student need

Pillar 5: Work effectively with teaching assistants.

- Effective deployment of teaching assistants (TAs) is critical.
- School leaders should pay careful attention to the roles of TAs and ensure they have a positive impact on pupils with SEND.
- TAs should supplement, not replace, teaching from the classroom teacher.

What we do at Rugby Free Secondary School in relation to this pillar:

- Research and practice of effective TA deployment
- Robust LSA rota with time taken to ensure students are supported appropriately
- Effective LSA CPD to support within the classroom role.
- Regular review of rota and impact of classroom support.
- Identification of appropriate intervention leads with necessary CPD provided

Wave 2 Interventions:

At Rugby Free Secondary School, we offer a multitude of Wave 2 interventions to support our students with SEND needs. These interventions are implemented as and when necessary, and are personalised and bespoke dependent on student context and profile. Supporting students with special educational needs should be part of a proactive approach to supporting all students—it is not an ‘add on’. It means understanding the specific barriers pupils face to learning and what they need in order to thrive so that they can be included in all that the school has to offer. Our interventions enable us to break and challenge some of these interventions:

Please see RFSS Waves 2025-26 shared on our website.