The Darent Federation of Schools

Inclusion Strategy 2026-2027

Inspiring Growth. Nurturing Potential.

KNOWN. SUPPORTED. CHALLENGED. FLOURISHING.

Removing barriers without removing ambition.

1. Our Vision for Inclusion

Every child should be known, supported, challenged and flourishing.

Inclusion is not separate from teaching, curriculum or school improvement. It is the way we ensure that every child can belong, participate, learn and achieve.

We want every child, regardless of need, background or starting point, to experience ambitious teaching, receive the right support at the right time, grow in confidence and independence, participate fully in school life and make strong progress from their individual starting points.

Successful inclusion is not simply about pupils with additional needs being present in classrooms. It means that they belong, participate, learn, contribute and achieve alongside their peers.

Inclusion at the Darent Federation means removing barriers without removing ambition.

What this means in practice

- Adults know pupils well: their strengths, needs, aspirations and the barriers they may encounter.
- Adaptation enables access to ambitious learning; it does not lower the ceiling of expectation.
- Support is precise, purposeful and increasingly builds independence.
- Provision is judged by the difference it makes, not simply by whether it has happened.
- Belonging, participation and pupil voice matter alongside achievement and progress.

2. Our Children and Our Context

Our strategy begins with our children rather than with a generic model of SEND provision. Across the Federation, we are seeing increasing complexity of need, including SEND, speech and language, emotional regulation, cognition and learning, neurodiversity, disadvantage, attendance, social and emotional wellbeing, and wider vulnerability. Many children experience more than one barrier at the same time.

Kemsing Primary School	**Sundridge & Brasted CE Primary School**
Kemsing has strong outcomes, positive attendance and high expectations. Our inclusion challenge is to ensure that pupils who need additional support continue to access an ambitious curriculum, with adaptation that enables access without limiting independence or challenge.	Sundridge & Brasted has an exceptionally inclusive culture and comparatively high levels of SEND, disadvantage and wider vulnerability. Our next challenge is to translate exceptional inclusion consistently into exceptional outcomes, particularly in communication and language, writing, attendance, independence and targeted provision.

The six barriers shaping our work

1 Increasing complexity of need	**2** Communication and language
3 Variability in independence	**4** Variability in inclusive classroom practice
5 Knowing what makes the greatest difference	**6** Attendance and participation

3. Our Five Strategic Priorities

The priorities below are our response to the barriers we have identified. Together, they form one coherent approach: strengthen the classroom, improve communication, build independence, sharpen provision and ensure every child belongs and participates.

Priority 1 — Inclusive Classrooms

Priority 2 — Communication for Learning

Priority 3 — Independence Without Isolation

Priority 4 — Precision Provision

Priority 5 — Belonging and Participation

Priority 1 — Inclusive Classrooms

Strengthen adaptive teaching

Responds to: Increasing complexity of need and variability in inclusive classroom practice.

What we will do	What will be different
• Refresh the Federation Adaptive Teaching Framework and establish clear expectations for inclusive classroom practice. • Develop staff expertise in adaptive teaching, neurodiversity, communication and language, emotional regulation and relational practice. • Use coaching, lesson visits and professional dialogue to strengthen consistency. • Develop teaching assistants as skilled educational professionals and ensure specialist recommendations translate into classroom practice. • Ensure adaptations enable pupils with SEND to access ambitious learning rather than an unnecessarily reduced curriculum.	• Adaptive teaching is consistently strong across both schools. • Staff confidence in meeting complex needs increases. • Pupils with SEND participate successfully in ambitious learning. • Adult support becomes increasingly precise rather than simply increasing in quantity.

Priority 2 — Communication for Learning

Strengthen communication and language

Responds to: Communication barriers that restrict learning, relationships, independence and pupils' ability to demonstrate what they know.

What we will do	What will be different
• Develop a Federation Communication and Language Framework. • Strengthen vocabulary and oracy across the curriculum. • Ensure communication-supportive strategies are understood by teachers and teaching assistants. • Identify communication needs earlier through proportionate assessment and screening. • Implement and evaluate targeted speech and language provision carefully, working with families and external professionals where needed.	• Communication-supportive practice is visible across the curriculum. • Pupils use increasingly rich vocabulary and communicate their ideas, needs and understanding with greater confidence. • Communication barriers are identified earlier. • Targeted provision demonstrates measurable impact.

Priority 3 — Independence Without Isolation

Develop independent and resilient learners

Responds to: Reliance on adult support, scaffolds or interventions that may enable access in the short term but create dependency over time.

What we will do	What will be different
• Establish Federation expectations for scaffolding and the gradual removal of support. • Develop pupil independence milestones and include independence in Pupil Progress Meetings. • Strengthen metacognition, resilience and self-regulation. • Develop staff understanding of effective teaching assistant deployment. • Ensure interventions transfer back into classroom learning and create opportunities for independent application.	• Pupils increasingly initiate and sustain learning independently. • Adult prompting reduces appropriately over time. • Pupils use strategies to learn, regulate themselves and persist when learning is difficult. • Skills developed through interventions transfer into classroom learning.

Priority 4 — Precision Provision

Know what works

Responds to: A need to become more precise about whether targeted provision is actually changing something for a child.

What we will do	What will be different
• Introduce a consistent Federation intervention evaluation framework. • Identify the intended outcome before provision begins and use baseline and review information proportionately. • Review provision maps termly and use Pupil Progress Meetings to evaluate vulnerable pupils holistically. • Stop, adapt or replace provision where evidence shows insufficient impact. • Check that specialist recommendations are implemented effectively.	• Provision demonstrates identifiable improvements in learning, communication, independence, participation, regulation, attendance, confidence or access. • Resources are increasingly directed towards approaches that make the greatest difference. • Provision that is not working is reviewed rather than simply continued.

Priority 5 — Belonging and Participation

Ensure every child has a voice and a place

Responds to: Barriers to attendance, participation, pupil voice and meaningful involvement in the wider life of school.

What we will do	What will be different
• Strengthen pupil voice, including the voice of pupils with SEND and other vulnerable pupils. • Ensure leadership, enrichment and participation opportunities are accessible to all. • Develop the Federation Pupil Parliament and use Rights Respecting principles to strengthen participation and belonging. • Monitor attendance and intervene early where patterns emerge, working collaboratively with families. • Celebrate diversity through the curriculum and wider school life.	• Pupils report feeling safe, valued, known and listened to. • Vulnerable pupils participate meaningfully in leadership, enrichment and the wider life of school. • Attendance improves where it has been identified as a barrier. • Families have confidence in the Federation's inclusive culture.

4. Making Inclusion Happen

Inclusion is everyone's responsibility. It is secured through strong teaching, skilled support, purposeful leadership, partnership with families and careful use of resources.

Who	Responsibility
Teachers	Remain responsible for the progress and development of every pupil they teach. Inclusive practice begins with high-quality classroom teaching informed by precise knowledge of pupils.
Teaching Assistants	Are skilled educational professionals whose deployment should increase access, participation and independence. Their success is measured by the difference their support enables pupils to make.
Inclusion / SEND Leadership	Provides strategic leadership, supports staff, coordinates specialist provision, works with families and external agencies, and evaluates impact. The role is not to "own" pupils with SEND.
Senior and Middle Leaders	Ensure inclusion is considered within curriculum development, assessment, attendance, behaviour, professional development and school improvement.
Governors	Provide strategic challenge and assurance, asking not only what provision exists but what difference it is making.

Partnership with pupils and families

Parents and carers know their children in ways that school cannot. Children themselves provide equally important insight into the barriers they experience and the support that helps them succeed. We will strengthen a partnership model in which pupils, families and professionals contribute to understanding strengths, needs, barriers, successful strategies, aspirations, provision and impact.

Investment

Resources will be prioritised according to identified pupil barriers and evidence of impact, including investment in people, specialist expertise, communication and language, targeted provision, regulation and wellbeing, curriculum access, leadership capacity, and partnership with families and external professionals.

For significant investment, leaders will ask: What barrier are we addressing? Why this response? What difference do we expect? How will we know?

5. How We Will Know

Our evaluation will deliberately extend beyond attainment. We will judge the strategy by what changes for children.

Achievement & progress	Pupils with SEND and other vulnerable pupils make strong progress from their starting points.
Access	Pupils access ambitious curriculum learning across subjects.
Independence	Pupils become less dependent on adults and increasingly use strategies for themselves.
Communication	Pupils increasingly communicate their ideas, understanding and needs.
Attendance & participation	Attendance improves where it is a barrier and vulnerable pupils are represented in leadership, enrichment and wider school life.
Belonging	Children report feeling safe, known, valued and listened to.
Behaviour & regulation	Pupils increasingly understand and regulate their emotions and participate successfully.
Intervention impact	We can demonstrate the difference targeted provision has made.
Adult & family confidence	Staff feel increasingly equipped to meet complex needs and families feel listened to and confident in support.
Transition	Vulnerable pupils are successfully prepared for movement between classes, phases, schools and into secondary education.

Our golden thread

WHO are our pupils?	**WHAT barriers have we identified?**	**WHAT response will make the greatest difference?**
HOW will w implement it?	**WHAT are we trying to improve?**	**WHAT difference has it made**

This thread will inform Pupil Progress Meetings, SEND and vulnerable pupil reviews, provision mapping, attendance reviews, lesson visits, intervention evaluation, pupil and parent voice, governor monitoring and Federation self-evaluation. Progress will be reviewed termly.

6. Our Commitment

The Darent Federation is proud of its inclusive culture, but this strategy is not intended simply to describe what we already do well. It sets out what we intend to make better.

During 2026-2027, we will strengthen adaptive teaching, communication and language, pupil independence, the precision of targeted provision, and pupils' participation and belonging. We will continue to respond to increasingly complex needs while protecting ambitious expectations for every child.

Our measure of successful inclusion is ultimately simple: children will be known, supported, challenged and flourishing.

KNOWN Adults understand children, their strengths and the barriers they experience.	**SUPPORTED** Barriers are identified early and the right support is provided.
CHALLENGED Need never becomes a ceiling on ambition.	**FLOURISHING** Children belong, participate, achieve and grow in independence and confidence.

Known. Supported. Challenged. Flourishing.