



Planning for Enhanced Provision: Guidance for Mainstream Schools

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Introduction

Mainstream schools are increasingly supporting pupils with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) whose needs cannot always be met within standard classroom structures. In response, many schools are developing enhanced provision models through flexible, approaches that sit within mainstream settings and provide practical personalised pathways for pupils.

This guidance draws on learning from Camden schools gained from visits undertaken by the Camden Learning SEND Adviser team. It reflects the experiences of school leaders, SENDCos, and practitioners who have developed enhanced provision in response to rising need, financial pressures, and a strong commitment to inclusive education.

It is intended as a **practical leadership tool** to support strategic thinking, decision making and implementation.

This guide will support leaders to:

- Reflect on what enhanced provision is – and what it is not
- Make informed, strategic decisions about whether enhanced provision is right for their school
- Plan and implement enhanced provision in line with the SEND Code of Practice
- Embed enhanced provision within a whole-school vision for inclusion
- Anticipate common challenges and critical success factors

SEND Code of Practice

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) provides the statutory framework for supporting pupils with SEND in mainstream education. Enhanced provision must sit firmly within this framework and should:

- Be rooted in the graduated approach: assess, plan, do, review
- Complement, not replace, high-quality teaching in mainstream classrooms
- Support inclusion, access to the curriculum, and positive outcomes
- Involve pupils and parents/carers meaningfully in decision-making

Enhanced provision should never be used to avoid statutory processes or as a substitute for appropriate external support, including Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessment where required.

A young girl with curly hair is smiling and holding a blue card with a math problem. The card shows the equation $7 + 3$ with a horizontal line under the plus sign. The background features large, curved shapes in shades of orange and pink.

What is Enhanced Provision?

Enhanced provision is a planned structured, and sustained model of support for pupils with high levels of SEND who are unable to access learning effectively within their classroom for part or all of the school day.

It is distinct from short-term or targeted interventions, which are typically time-limited, focused on specific outcomes and delivered alongside full-time classroom access.

Enhanced provision is school-led and enables earlier intervention and more personalised responses to pupils' emerging or ongoing needs, often without requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Enhanced provision often includes:

- Small group or individual teaching pathways that are planned to be sustained longer term due to the significant cognitive or behavioural needs of the child making continuous mainstream access problematic
- Parallel or blended curricula linked to mainstream learning
- Dedicated spaces with predictable routines
- Staff trained in therapeutic, sensory, or regulation-based approaches

Principles for effective enhanced provision in mainstream primary schools

Enhanced provision in mainstream schools is most effective when it is purposeful, evidence-informed, relational, and fully embedded within a whole-school approach to inclusion following these core principles:

1. Clear purpose and vision

Enhanced provision must be rooted in a shared, values-driven purpose that aligns with the school's inclusion strategy.

It should be clear why the provision exists, who it is for, and how it complements mainstream practice.

2. Robust identification of need

Access must be equitable, transparent and based on strong assessment. Identification should draw on the graduated approach and patterns of need across the school—not isolated referrals.

3. Skilled staffing and thoughtful environments

Provision succeeds when staffing is consistent, relational and specialist, and when spaces are intentionally designed to support regulation and learning.

4. Ambitious, personalised curriculum

Curriculum pathways must be coherent, purposeful and linked to mainstream learning, integrating EHCP outcomes where relevant. A balanced timetable should include academic learning, therapeutic input, sensory experiences and enrichment.

5. Inclusive culture and relational behaviour practice

Provision must reflect the school's wider culture, not operate as a separate unit. Behaviour is understood as communication, and pupils remain meaningfully part of the school community.

6. Rigorous monitoring, outcomes and sustainability

Provision must be regularly reviewed using academic, behavioural, emotional and engagement data, alongside professional judgement and pupil voice. Monitoring focuses on progress, belonging and reintegration.

7. Strong leadership and clear accountability

Leadership must be strategic and integrated into whole-school systems. A senior leader holds overall accountability, with the SENCO, provision lead and class teachers playing defined roles.

8. Meaningful parent and pupil engagement

Families and pupils are active partners in planning, reviewing and shaping provision. Early involvement and ongoing communication are essential.

9. Long-term sustainability and resourcing

Provision must be financially and operationally sustainable, with clear planning for staffing, training and long-term development.

A Case Study: Netley Primary School

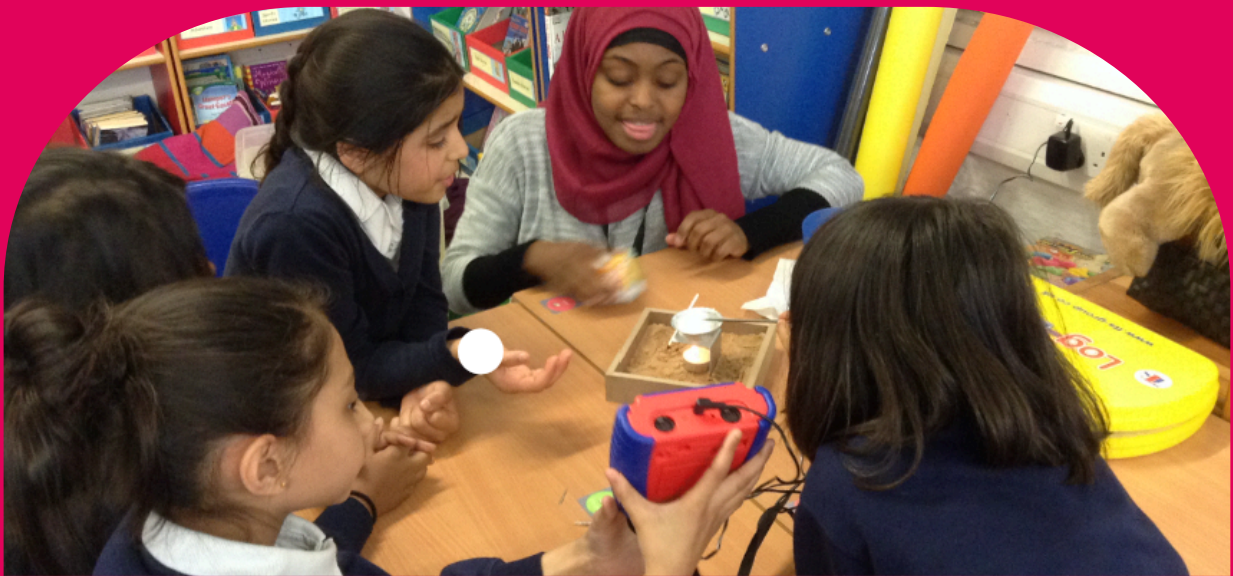
At Netley Primary School, leaders responded to a highly complex context in EYFS and Key Stage 1, where between 40–58% of pupils were identified with SEND, including many with significant communication needs, developmental delay and autism profiles. They recognised that a traditional classroom model, even with strong adaptive teaching, was no longer sufficient to ensure consistent regulation, safety and meaningful access to learning. In response, leaders developed a graduated SEND Pathway Model, designed as an integrated approach to organising provision. This enabled support to be flexed, intensified or reduced in line with need, while maintaining a clear commitment to inclusion within mainstream education.

Provision was structured across three pathways. Pathway 1 secured strong universal provision through adaptive teaching, consistent routines and a focus on early language, phonics, reading and writing. Pathway 1+ provided enhanced support within the classroom, including targeted intervention, accelerated early reading and increased adult input. Pathway 2 combined classroom learning with access to specialist spaces, where teaching focused on regulation, executive function and readiness to learn, supported by skilled staff and multi-agency input. A small number of pupils accessed Pathway 3, bespoke specialist provision within the mainstream site, with planned opportunities for integration.

Across all pathways, teaching emphasised structured routines, small-group support and targeted intervention, enabling pupils to develop and apply key skills over time. Pupils moved flexibly between pathways according to need, ensuring provision remained responsive and avoided fixed groupings.

The introduction of the model improved consistency and clarity across the phase. Learning environments became calmer, pupils were better able to regulate and engage, and access to phonics, reading and writing strengthened. Staff reported greater confidence in matching provision to need, and pupils increasingly reintegrated into mainstream classes with appropriate support.

Leaders identified that a clearly articulated graduated model provided a shared framework for decision-making, enabling earlier intervention and reducing reliance on individualised support. The approach demonstrated how specialist provision, when aligned closely to classroom practice, can strengthen inclusive practice across a mainstream setting.



Planning for Enhanced Provision

Key Questions

Before developing enhanced provision, schools should consider:



NEED AND PURPOSE

What patterns of need exist in the school?

What is the purpose of the provision and what need will it support?

Is there a shared understanding of what enhanced provision is across our school?

How will we ensure the provision does not become a default destination for pupils whose needs could be met through high-quality mainstream practice?

How does this align with our vision and values?

STAFFING AND SPACE

Is there an appropriate physical space to support a sustainable model?

Do we have leaders to provide strategic oversight and skilled staff to reliably deliver the provision?

How will staff be trained and supported?

EQUITY

How will pupils have access to elements of mainstream provision?

What pathways will be in place for them to transition out of the provision over time?

Which groups are disproportionately represented e.g. disadvantaged pupils and what additional barriers might this present?

How will we monitor patterns of referral to ensure decisions are evidence-based and free from bias?

CULTURE AND BEHAVIOUR

How will we make sure pupils feel safe, understood and that they belong?

How will staff respond to behaviour in a consistent, relational and needs-led way?

How will we ensure high expectations while recognising and supporting individual needs?

SUSTAINABILITY

How will we measure and review the impact of provision over time?

How will the provision be funded, reviewed, and adapted?

How will we ensure progressive learning experiences for all pupils over time?

What external support or validation do we need to ensure that we are continually meeting needs appropriately?

IMPACT AND SUCCESS

What outcomes will define success for individual pupils?








What preparation, monitoring and oversight need to be in place to ensure that all pupils are accessing an ambitious, well-sequenced curriculum that is well matched to individual needs?



Implementation

The effective development of enhanced provision depends on strong leadership, a clear sense of purpose, and a shared whole-school commitment to inclusion. Practice across Camden shows that successful models are not defined solely by physical spaces, but by the systems, relationships, and leadership decisions that underpin them.

This implementation guidance is informed by that practice and is organised around a set of core pillars that together support sustainable and inclusive enhanced provision. These pillars are interdependent and should be considered as a whole rather than in sequence.

-  Purpose and vision – a shared understanding of why enhanced provision exists and how it aligns with inclusive values.
-  Identification of need – robust, evidence-informed processes rooted in the graduated approach.
-  Staffing and space – stable, skilled staff and intentionally designed environments that support regulation, learning, and reintegration.
-  Quality of curriculum – ambitious, coherent curriculum pathways linked to mainstream learning.
-  Culture and behaviour – relational practice, belonging, and effective use of needs-led assessment.
-  Monitoring and sustainability – meaningful outcomes, review, and long-term planning.
-  Leadership and management – clear accountability, skilled staffing, and strategic oversight.

The sections that follow explore each pillar in detail, supported by leadership checklists and practice spotlights to support reflection, planning, and evaluation.

Purpose and Vision

Enhanced provision is driven by a clearly articulated purpose rooted in a school's values and inclusive ethos. Leaders establish a shared understanding of why the provision is being developed, which pupils it is intended to support, and how it aligns with the school's wider inclusion strategy and development priorities.

This vision is co-constructed with senior leaders, the SENDCo, governors, and staff, and communicated clearly to the wider school community, including parents and carers. It is regularly revisited to ensure it continues to guide decision-making and respond to pupils' changing needs over time.

Leaders are aware that without a shared and sustained purpose, enhanced provision risks becoming a reactive or isolated solution rather than a coherent, whole-school approach.

Leadership checklist



Have we clearly defined why we are considering enhanced provision?

Can we explain the difference between our proposed model and traditional SEND interventions?

Have we aligned this work with our inclusion vision and wider SEND strategy?

Spotlight on practice

At **Rhyl Community Primary School**, enhanced provision was developed with a clearly defined purpose: to support pre-verbal pupils in Key Stage 1 with significant communication needs as part of the school's wider commitment to inclusive practice. Leaders grounded this development in a shared understanding that these pupils required targeted, specialist support alongside consistent access to rich, language-focused learning within the mainstream environment. From the outset, leaders established clarity about which pupils the provision was designed for, the barriers it aimed to address, and how it would operate as part of, rather than separate from, everyday classroom practice. This vision was co-constructed by senior leaders, the SENDCo and governors, ensuring collective ownership and alignment with whole-school priorities. It was communicated clearly to staff and has been revisited as the provision has developed, supporting consistency in implementation and decision-making.

As a result, the provision has remained tightly aligned to its original purpose, avoiding drift into a reactive model. Pupils benefit from a coherent blend of specialist communication support and meaningful inclusion in mainstream learning, strengthening inclusive practice across the school and reinforcing high expectations for all learners.

Identification of Need

Clear, consistent processes for identifying pupils are essential to ensure equity, transparency, and appropriate access to enhanced provision. Identification is rooted in robust assessment, evidence from the graduated response and a shared understanding of pupils' barriers to learning.

Schools must ensure they analyse assessment information to identify patterns of need across the school, rather than responding to individual cases in isolation. This helps ensure enhanced provision is developed in response to sustained and strategic need, rather than short-term fluctuations.

Entry, review, and exit processes should be clearly defined and regularly revisited to ensure the provision remains responsive and that pupils can move in and out of support as their needs change.

Leadership checklist



Have we identified a pattern of pupils whose needs cannot be met effectively within existing classroom provision and do we have a clear evidence base over time?

Do these pupils require high levels of emotional regulation, therapeutic input, or individualised learning that exceeds current support?

Are we confident this reflects a sustained and strategic need rather than a temporary cohort fluctuation?

Spotlight on practice

At Holy Trinity & St Silas Primary School, identification of need has been driven by systematic analysis of cohort-level patterns, particularly within a Year 5 cohort with a high proportion of pupils with SEND, including autism, ADHD, SEMH and trauma. Leaders triangulated assessment, behaviour and engagement data with professional insight to establish a shared and precise understanding of pupils' barriers to learning. This informed the development of a flexible teaching model in which pupils were grouped dynamically across subjects and, at times, within lessons, supported by an additional teacher and the purposeful use of classroom and adjacent spaces. These environments were used to provide targeted support for regulation, language development and core curriculum skills, while maintaining strong links to whole-class learning.

Clear entry and review processes were established and refined through regular team discussions, ongoing formative assessment and planned review points, enabling pupils to move fluidly in and out of support as their needs changed. This helped ensure provision remained responsive and avoided fixed or deficit-led groupings.

As a result, pupils demonstrated sustained engagement in learning more consistently, and those with higher levels of need developed greater capacity to regulate, participate and remain in learning, impacting positively on academic attainment.

Staffing, capacity, space and environment

Staffing and the physical environment are foundational to effective enhanced provision. Strong practice recognises that it is not defined by a room alone, but by the expertise, consistency, and deployment of staff within well-designed spaces. Effective staffing prioritises relational continuity, clear roles, and the development of specialist skills. Staff know pupils well, provide consistent, responsive support, and maintain links with mainstream classrooms to enable inclusion and transition. Physical spaces are designed to support regulation, predictability, and flexible learning. They create calm, structured environments that reduce sensory overload while maintaining high expectations. In practice, this includes:

- Flexible layouts with defined work and low-arousal areas
- Minimal, purposeful displays with clear visual supports
- Easy access to toilets, outdoor spaces, and quiet areas for self-regulation
- Connection to peers through planned access to mainstream classrooms and shared spaces

Leadership checklist



Do staff have the specialist expertise, clear roles, and ongoing development needed to deliver the provision effectively?

Is leadership of the provision clear and ensuring a coherent curriculum and consistent practice that is aligned with mainstream?

Does the environment meet pupils' needs through low-arousal design, clear structure, and spaces for regulation and independence?

Is the environment flexible, adapting to changing needs and enabling staged reintegration?

Spotlight on practice

At St. Alban's Primary School, a six-week Pathways to Adulthood programme ran daily in the afternoons, focusing on developing independence and practical life skills for pupils with complex SEND, particularly younger pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 with autism and communication needs. The programme reflected the school's wider approach of combining specialist support with meaningful inclusion.

Its effectiveness was underpinned by consistent, skilled staffing and a structured environment. Adults used their knowledge of pupils to provide carefully scaffolded support, gradually reducing this to build confidence and independence. The environment promoted calm, predictability and engagement, enabling pupils to take part successfully in practical activities. Learning was carefully sequenced across the programme. Pupils engaged in structured activities such as food preparation, communication and independent living tasks, with expectations increasing over time. They worked towards producing an evaluated recipe book, with growing opportunities for choice, communication and problem-solving.

As a result, pupils developed greater confidence, independence and engagement, with staff and parents noting increased participation and initiative. The programme demonstrated how aligned staffing, environment and curriculum design can deliver meaningful outcomes for pupils with complex needs.

Quality of Curriculum

Enhanced provision should offer an ambitious, purposeful and coherent curriculum. Delivery should integrate EHCP outcomes with EYFS and National Curriculum expectations, with a clear focus on the building blocks of learning: cognition and learning, communication and interaction, and personal and social development.

A well-structured timetable should balance academic, therapeutic, sensory and enrichment opportunities, enabling pupils to learn, practise and apply key skills. Teaching should emphasise pre-teaching, structured support and consistent use of accessible resources to build understanding and independence.

In practice, this includes pre-teaching vocabulary and concepts, using visual and structured approaches for pupils with autism, and providing repetition and scaffolded tasks to secure early learning and support regulation and interaction. Curriculum planning should be led by teachers and overseen by SENDCos, with strong collaboration between provision staff and class teachers to ensure shared responsibility, sustained ambition, and opportunities for pupils to apply their learning across contexts.

Leadership checklist



Can we deliver a personalised curriculum that remains clearly linked to the curriculum?

Are we designing for progress in both academic learning and emotional development?

How integrated is the provision with mainstream classrooms (e.g. lessons, events, breaktimes, interventions)?

Have we considered, and where suitable enabled, the use of assistive technology such as such as communication devices, adaptive software, or specialist learning apps?

Spotlight on practice

At **Edith Neville Primary School**, leaders identified the need for significant curriculum adaptation for three Year 6 pupils working at early pre-Key Stage standards, who required a different approach as they prepared for transition to secondary school.

The school developed a bespoke curriculum pathway integrating functional literacy and numeracy with a focus on communication, personal development and independence. Pupils accessed a blended model of adapted learning in class alongside targeted sessions with skilled adults. Learning was structured around real-life contexts such as shopping, cooking and travel, with activities designed to build and apply key skills over time. Teaching emphasised repetition, structured support and accessible resources to secure understanding and confidence.

The curriculum remained ambitious and aligned to pupils' developmental stages, with a clear focus on foundational skills. Close collaboration between the class teacher and SENDCo ensured provision was coherent and linked to longer-term outcomes, particularly transition and preparation for adulthood.

This approach led to increased engagement and participation. Pupils accessed learning that was meaningful and motivating, while developing the skills needed for the next stage of education. As the SENDCo reflected, "For the first time, learning for M feels like she is having fun."

Culture and Behaviour

Enhanced provision is most effective when it is embedded within a strong whole-school culture of inclusion, rather than operating as a separate or isolated space. Ensuring that the provision reflects the same values, expectations and relational approaches as the rest of the school is widely considered strong practice. This means creating a calm, predictable and emotionally safe environment where behaviour is understood as communication and support is planned around pupils' underlying needs.

Approaches include consistent and proactive restorative structures, clear routines, trusted adults, regulation strategies and careful monitoring of behaviour patterns over time. The aim should not be to remove pupils from the mainstream community, but to strengthen their sense of belonging, trust, and support successful participation in learning. High-quality enhanced provision therefore becomes part of the school's wider graduated response through a purposeful, needs-led intervention that promotes inclusion.

Leadership checklist



Are expectations, routines, and language consistent between mainstream classrooms and enhanced provision?

Do pupils accessing enhanced provision remain visibly and meaningfully part of the wider school community?

Is pupil voice used to inform adjustments to behaviour approaches and provision design?

Are staff supported through training and supervision to maintain consistent, inclusive practice?

'Spotlight' on practice

*At **East Stour Primary School, Kent**, leaders recognised that some Key Stage 2 pupils with significant SEMH needs were struggling to regulate, engage and participate consistently in mainstream lessons. Behaviour was understood as a signal of unmet need, and pupils required a more relational and structured approach.*

*In response, the school developed **Timpani Class**, an internal alternative provision led by a qualified teacher and supported by teaching assistants. The provision offers a calm, consistent environment where pupils can access learning while developing emotional regulation, confidence and social skills.*

*The approach is rooted in relationships, trust and emotional safety. Pupils are supported through mentoring, nurture-based approaches and clear routines, with tools such as **Boxall Profiles** and **SDQs** used to understand need and review impact.*

***Timpani Class** is not used as a place of separation or exclusion. It strengthens pupils' sense of belonging and supports reintegration into mainstream learning, reflecting **East Stour's** wider inclusive culture where inclusion is described as a "golden thread" running through the school.*



Monitoring, Outcomes, and Sustainability

Monitoring of internal enhanced provision is most effective when it is rigorous, regular and linked to a pupil's individual plan, so that the provision remains purposeful rather than becoming a long-term holding space. Review of both academic and wider developmental outcomes including attendance, engagement, behaviour patterns, emotional regulation, wellbeing, safeguarding concerns, reintegration into mainstream learning and pupil voice support broad intelligence gathering. A combination of quantitative data and professional judgement, such as assessment information, Boxall Profiles or similar tools, behaviour logs, attendance records, lesson observations and staff feedback can be used to achieve this.

Review systems that involve the SENDCo, provision lead, class teacher, pastoral or safeguarding staff, parents and, where appropriate the pupil, ensure that support is adjusted in response to need.

Monitoring should also consider whether pupils are maintaining a strong connection with their mainstream class and whether the provision is helping them build the skills and confidence needed to participate successfully.

In this way, evaluation focuses on meaningful progress towards learning, belonging and successful reintegration to the main classroom.

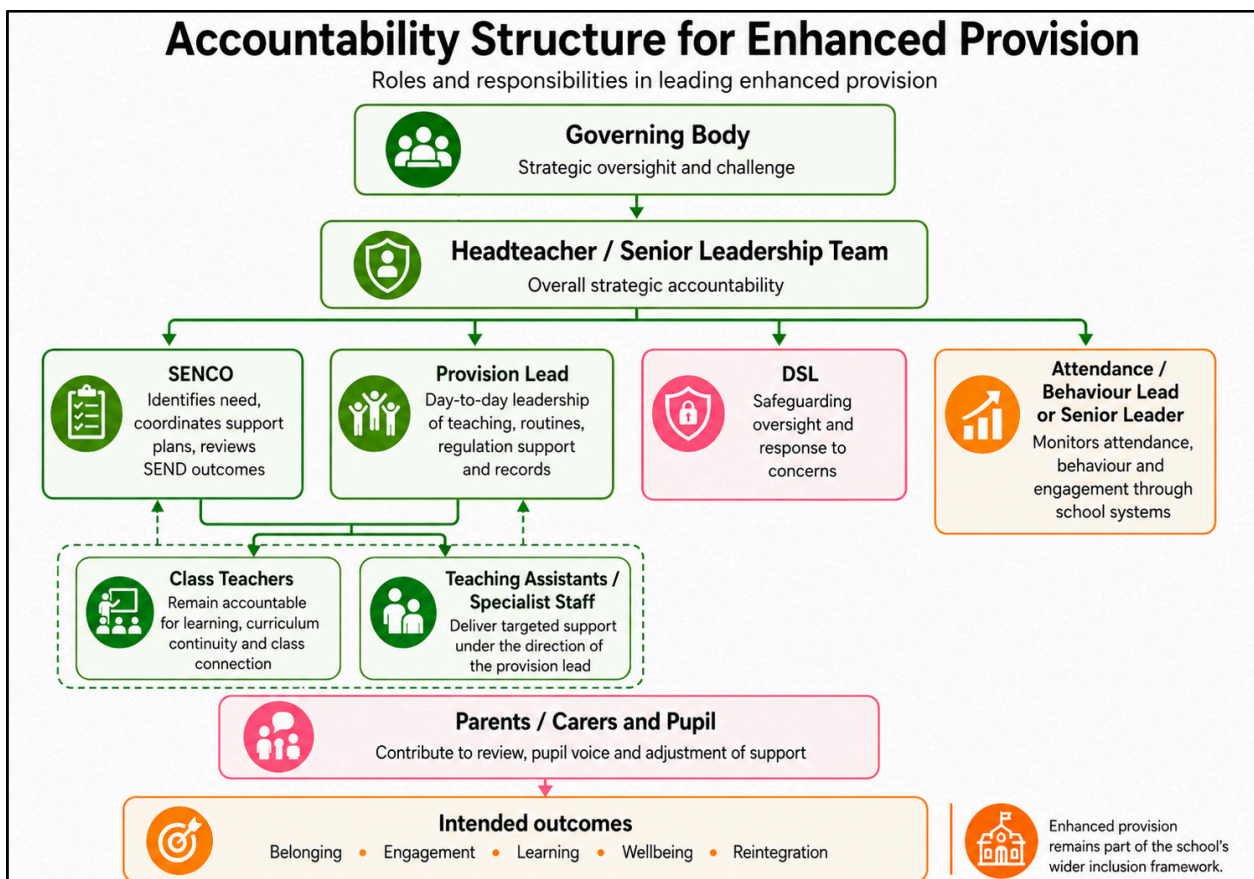
Leadership and Management

Effective leadership of enhanced provision relies on a shared model of responsibility, with clear strategic oversight and strong day-to-day coordination. The provision should be led through the school's wider inclusion systems, rather than operating as a separate or informal arrangement. A named senior leader holds overall accountability for the quality, purpose and impact of the provision, ensuring that it aligns with the school's approaches to SEND, behaviour, safeguarding, attendance and curriculum. The SENDCo works closely with this senior leader to identify pupil need, coordinate individual support plans and ensure that provision forms part of the graduated response. Day to day, a named provision lead manages the learning environment, routines, relationships, regulation support and record keeping, supported by teaching assistants or specialist staff with relevant training in SEND, SEMH, communication and behaviour.

Class teachers remain actively involved in planning and reviewing learning, so that pupils continue to access an appropriate curriculum and maintain a meaningful connection with their mainstream class. Safeguarding concerns are overseen by the DSL, while attendance, behaviour and engagement are reviewed through the school's usual leadership systems. Governors provide external oversight by asking how well the provision is improving pupils' learning, wellbeing, attendance, behaviour and reintegration. This creates a coherent leadership structure in which responsibility is shared, but accountability is clear, and pupils receive targeted support while remaining fully part of the school community.

At Holy Trinity and St Silas Primary School, the Headteacher has empowered senior leaders to lead staff through a coaching model that explores relational practice and ensures it is embedded within strategic decision-making.

At the Rosary Catholic primary School, the Chair of Governors has been actively involved in the SEND review, contributing to discussions around adapting spaces and understanding the changing needs of the pupil population.



Readiness Tool

The readiness tool is designed to support you when reflecting on key areas. It encourages leaders to take a strategic, whole-school view—ensuring that any provision developed is thoughtfully planned, well-supported and aligned with the school’s inclusive vision. Taking time to work through these questions will help build shared understanding, secure commitment and lay the foundations for effective and sustainable practice.

1. Understanding the Need		
	Y/N	Next Steps
Have we identified a pattern of pupils whose needs cannot be met within current provision? Do these pupils require high levels of regulation, therapeutic input or individualised learning? Is this a sustained need rather than a short-term cohort issue?		
2. Clarity of Purpose		
Have we clearly defined why we are developing enhanced provision? Can we explain how this differs from existing SEND support or ARPs? Is it aligned with our inclusion vision and SEND strategy?		
3. Leadership & Governance Commitment		
Have SLT and governors discussed and agreed the approach? Have we sought external advice? Is this part of a long-term plan rather than a quick fix?		
4. Staffing & Capacity		
Do we have staff with appropriate skills? Is there leadership capacity? Are training pathways in place? Is staffing consistent day to day?		

5. Physical Space & Environment

Do we have suitable, adaptable spaces?
Is the environment structured and supportive?
Have we considered outdoor or therapeutic spaces?

6. Curriculum & Reintegration Planning

Can we deliver a personalised curriculum linked to mainstream?
Do we have assistive technology?
How will pupils remain connected to mainstream?
Are we planning for academic and social and emotional progress?

7. Parent & Pupil Engagement

Do we involve parents early? Are there opportunities for parent collaboration?
Is pupil voice captured?

8. Monitoring, Outcomes & Impact

Have we defined success measures?
Can we track impact? Will this be reviewed regularly?

9. Funding & Sustainability

Have we explored funding? Is there a sustainability plan?
Are there collaboration opportunities?



Strengthening Enhanced Provision in Camden Schools

This work is grounded in a shared commitment to:

- Strengthening inclusive practice across all schools
- Developing sustainable, high-quality provision
- Ensuring that pupils with SEND feel they belong, are understood and can succeed

Enhanced provision is most effective when it is thoughtfully planned, collaboratively developed and continually reviewed.

Enhanced Provision CPD Sessions will run across 2026 - 2027 bringing together schools who wish to further develop their knowledge and expertise and share their own practice with others.

Bookings can be made through:

<https://camdenlearning.org.uk/professional-development/book-cpd-events/>

**With thanks to
Jayne Frankin
Helen Connor
Camden Primary Schools**

Camden Learning is a schools-led partnership between Camden schools and Camden Council, established in 2017 to drive improvement through collective expertise. Guided by values of excellence and social equity, we support teachers, leaders and support staff in their work.

Our collaborative model helps schools take shared responsibility for outcomes, ensuring every child and young person in Camden benefits from high-quality, inclusive education.



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