



Cumbria Education Trust Inclusion Strategy 2026-27



At Cumbria Education Trust (CET), inclusion sits at the heart of our educational model. We are committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of need or starting point, can access a high-quality education, feel a strong sense of belonging, and achieve success.

Our Inclusion Strategy details our collective approach to delivering inclusive education for all children, including those with SEND, funded by our core school budget (including the notional SEN budget) and the inclusive mainstream fund (IMF).

Our strategy is rooted in early identification, expert teaching, strong partnerships, and a relentless focus on removing barriers to learning.

Strategic Principles

- Early and accurate identification of need
- Inclusive, high-quality teaching as the foundation
- Targeted and evidence-informed intervention
- Strong partnerships with families, agencies, and communities
- A Trust-wide, collaborative approach to complexity
- Ambition for all, with inclusion as the default

1. Assessment and Identification

We prioritise early and precise identification of barriers to learning.

- A Trust-wide assessment calendar provides three annual cycles of review
- Schools use a combination of:
 - Standardised assessments (e.g. CATs, NGRT)
 - Diagnostic tools (e.g. WellComm, My Voice Counts)
- Internal referral systems, which allows staff to escalate concerns quickly
- SENCO expertise ensures that assessment is responsive, purposeful, and timely

Impact: Children's needs are identified early, enabling swift and appropriate support.

2. High-Quality Intervention

All pupils receive support that is carefully matched to their needs and regularly reviewed.

- Full implementation of EHCP provision
- Targeted interventions focused on:



- Foundational learning
- Speech and language
- Social and emotional development
- Termly reviews ensure interventions remain effective and adaptive
- Specialist support and alternative provision are used strategically and proportionately

Principle: Mainstream inclusion remains the priority, with additional provision designed to support reintegration wherever possible.

3. Collaborative Decision-Making (Complex Panels)

A Trust-wide Complex Case Panel meets half-termly to:

- Review complex or 'stuck' cases
- Strengthen professional decision-making
- Share expertise across schools
- Provide ongoing professional development

Impact: Improved outcomes through collective expertise and consistent approaches.

4. Enhanced and Specialist Provision

Many of our schools provide Enhanced Provision or SRPs for pupils with significant needs.

- Carefully designed environments support readiness for learning
- Provision balances:
 - Individualised support
 - Access to mainstream where possible
- Focus on building independence and increasing inclusion over time through careful planning and reviewing.

Principle: Inclusion is dynamic – we support pupils to engage in mainstream learning as far as possible, as soon as possible.

5. Supporting Medical Needs

All schools fully implement statutory guidance for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

- Individual Healthcare Plans ensure personalised support
- Provision may include:
 - Fatigue management
 - Flexible support
 - Staff training
 - Co-created intimate care plans
- Close monitoring supports full access where able with increased participation

Impact: Pupils with medical needs access education safely and consistently.

6. Attendance as a Foundation for Inclusion

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Attendance is a key driver of inclusion and success.

- CET's aligned attendance strategy ensures:
 - Rapid response to absence
 - Strong communication with families
 - Targeted support for persistent absence
- "Meet and greet" and personalised support to improve engagement
- Attendance is celebrated
- Attendance is a shared responsibility

Impact: Improved attendance enables sustained access to learning and support.

7. Positive Behaviour and Culture

Our behaviour approach is consistent, relational, and inclusive.

- A Trust-wide model supports pupils to "get back to their best"
- Behaviour is understood in context, particularly where linked to SEND
- Pupils are explicitly taught:
 - Emotional regulation
 - Social skills
 - Strategies for managing behaviour
- Supervised social times provide opportunities to model and develop positive interaction

Impact: A calm, supportive environment where all pupils can learn and thrive.

8. Inclusive Learning Environments

We adapt environments to reduce barriers and support engagement.

- Flexible classroom adaptations include:
 - Sensory resources
 - Specialist seating and equipment
 - Quiet or breakout spaces
- Environments are responsive to sensory, physical, and emotional needs

The SEND reforms call for all schools to have Inclusion Bases. CET schools are already developing these spaces.

Impact: Pupils can access learning in ways that meet their individual needs.

9. Accessible Technology

Technology is used to enhance access to the curriculum.

- Devices and software support:
 - Reading (text-to-speech)
 - Writing (speech-to-text)
- Pupils are enabled to work more independently



Impact: Increased accessibility and reduced barriers to learning.

10. Skilled and Responsive Staffing

Our staffing model is designed to meet the needs of our pupils.

- A range of roles provide layered support:
 - Teaching Assistants
 - HLTA and specialist staff
 - Pastoral and engagement roles
- Regular training ensures staff are:
 - Confident
 - Skilled
 - Responsive to emerging needs

Impact: High-quality, adaptive support across all schools.

11. Partnership with Parents and Carers

We work in true partnership with families.

- Parent Engagement Framework ensures:
 - Clear communication
 - Involvement in decision-making
 - Support for learning beyond the classroom

Impact: Strong relationships that support better outcomes for children.

12. Community and Agency Partnerships

Inclusion extends beyond school.

- Collaboration with:
 - External agencies (e.g. CAMHS, family support services)
 - Local community initiatives (e.g. REACH programme)
- Access to wider support ensures needs are met holistically

Impact: A joined-up approach to supporting children and families with local support.

13. Enrichment and Pupil Leadership

All pupils are entitled to a rich and inclusive enrichment offer.

- Opportunities include:
 - Leadership roles
 - Peer mentoring
 - Broad extracurricular activities
- Aligned with enrichment benchmarks:

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- Arts, sport, nature, civic engagement, and life skills

Impact: Increased confidence, belonging, and personal development.

14. Expert Support and Continuous Improvement

Schools are supported by a strong central inclusion team.

- Includes:
 - Director of Inclusion
 - Assistant Director of Inclusion
 - School improvement lead (SIL)
 - Specialist Practice Partners
- Annual reviews of SEND and safeguarding provision drive improvement
- Trust-wide collaboration ensures consistency and excellence

Impact: Continual refinement of practice and high standards across CET.

Our Commitments Moving Forward

We will continue to:

- Strengthen inclusive practice in every classroom
- Invest in staff expertise and development
- Work collaboratively across the Trust and with partners
- Respond proactively to national SEND developments
- Ensure every child feels valued, supported, and successful

Final Statement

Inclusion is not an add-on – it is the foundation of everything we do. Through a unified, evidence-informed, and compassionate approach, we ensure that every pupil is given the opportunity to Be the Best they can Be.

Appendix A outlines our school specific developments for 2026-2027.