

# Lockington CE VC Primary School



## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Date Policy Formally Agreed By Governors	January 2023
Date Policy Becomes Effective	January 2023
Review Date	January 2026
Person Responsible for Implementation and Monitoring	SENDCO (Julie Cattle)

## 1. Introduction

This policy outlines the organisation and management of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Lockington CE VC Primary School.

It is written within the context of our school's mission statement:

*Our school is committed to working together to develop lively, enquiring minds and to promoting outstanding standards of achievement in a happy, safe and caring environment, based on Christian values, which encourage all to show respect, acceptance and understanding of others.*

It has also been written in the context of our school's Christian vision, rooted in the teachings of Jesus:

*'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven' (Matthew 5:16).*

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice (September 2014) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice (September 2014)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014)
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document (Sept 2014)
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework (2021).

This policy was created by the school's SENCO with the SEND Governor in liaison with all staff and parents of pupils with SEND.

Name and contact details of SENCO: Mrs J Cattle (Headteacher) Lockington CE VC Primary School, e-mail [Lockington.primary@eastriding.gov.uk](mailto:Lockington.primary@eastriding.gov.uk), tel. 01430 810240. Julie Cattle holds the National Award for SEN (NASENCO).

Lockington CE VC Primary School provides a broad and balanced curriculum, within a framework of Christian Values. We have high aspirations and expectations for all pupils. We believe that every teacher is a teacher of every child, including those with SEND. The National Curriculum 2014 is our starting point for planning to meet the specific needs of individuals and groups of pupils. Teachers set learning challenges and respond to pupils' diverse learning needs in an endeavour to provide them with an education which will enable them to achieve their full potential.

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child has a learning difficulty if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definitions (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them. Children 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. (Children and Families Act, Section 20, 2014).

Teachers take account of pupils' special educational needs requirements and make provision to support individuals to enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Health care provision or social care provision which educates or trains a child or young person is also to be treated as special educational provision (Code of Practice, 2014).

Such pupils require provision that is 'additional to or different from' that provided within the differentiated curriculum to better respond to one or more of the four areas of need identified in the Code of Practice (September 2014):

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory/physical

Pupils may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures curriculum planning and assessment for pupils with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child.

This policy details how we will endeavour to ensure necessary provision is made for any pupils who have special educational needs and that those needs are known to all who are likely to work with them. We will also ensure teachers are able to identify and provide for those pupils with special educational needs, allowing them to join in all school activities together with pupils who do not have special educational needs.

This policy is part of a whole school strategy to promote the inclusion and effective learning for all pupils and should be read in conjunction with our policies on Inclusion and Teaching and Learning.

## **2. Policy Aims and Objectives**

### **Aims:**

The overarching aim of this policy is to raise the aspirations and expectations of all children with special needs or disabilities to achieve their best educational and other outcomes through the involvement of parents, carers, children and other partners in the 'assessment, planning, doing and reviewing' of provision.

### **Objectives:**

- Create an environment that meets the special needs of each child;
- Ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to management and provision of support for special educational needs and disability;

- Provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will work within the SEND policy, providing support and advice for all staff;
- Enable all children to have full access through reasonable adjustments to all elements of the curriculum.
- Work in partnership with the Local Authority and outside agencies to ensure a multi-professional approach to meeting needs;
- Ensure records follow the child which are clear, factual and up-to-date;
- Embody principles of the distinctively Christian nature of our school in all aspects of learning.

### **3. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

Through our curriculum, policies and practices, we ensure the school meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, disability and social circumstances. It is important that we meet the diverse needs of pupils to ensure inclusion, to prepare pupils for full participation in society. Everyone is valued, and diversity is seen as a rich resource to enhance and support the learning of all. We ensure classroom and extra-curricular activities encourage the participation of pupils, drawing on their knowledge and experiences outside school.

Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that pupils:

- have different educational, behavioural and cultural needs;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Teachers respond to pupil's needs by:

- providing support for those who need specific help in identified areas of learning;
- planning for pupils' full participation in learning;
- helping pupils to manage their behaviour and take part in learning effectively and safely;
- supporting individuals to manage their emotions and to take part in learning.

### **4. Identification, Assessment and Provision**

Teachers and the SENCO, along with parents, carers, children and outside partners will work together to identify children's special educational needs through a detailed analysis of:

- Teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil;
- Information on pupil progress, attainment and behaviour;
- Individual's development in comparison to peers;
- The views and experiences of parents and the child's own views;
- Advice from external support services.

Pupils' needs should be met and identified as early as possible. The school will assess each child's levels of attainment on entry to ensure it builds on learning already established prior to starting school. If a child already has an identified special educational need, this information can be transferred and the class teacher and SENCO will use this information to:

- provide starting points for the development of appropriate provision;
- identify action to support the child within the class;
- use the assessment process to identify learning difficulties;

- ensure on-going observation and assessments provide regular feedback about children's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning.

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English requires particular care. The class teacher will look carefully at all aspects of the child's performance to establish whether the problems are due to limitations in their command of English or arise from SEN.

The school takes a graduated response to special educational needs. Provision intensifies over time if the child continues to struggle to make progress.

We aim to meet children's learning needs through differentiated planning, teaching and support, as part of our normal classroom practice and quality first teaching. Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from support or specialist staff.

Where a pupil or group needs additional support to catch up with age-related expectations, short term intervention programmes will be provided. Pupils in receipt of such intervention will not normally be considered to have SEN.

If our assessments indicate a child has a significant long term learning difficulty we will continue the above strategies to support them but also plan more specialist individualised provision, designed to meet their specific needs. These children will be included on our SEN register and parents will be made fully aware.

The key test of the need for action is that current rates of progress are inadequate. Adequate progress can be identified as that which:

- prevents the attainment gap between the child and his peers from widening;
- closes the attainment gap between the child and his peers;
- improves the child's previous rate of progress;
- ensures access to the full curriculum;
- demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills;
- demonstrates improvements in the child's behaviour.

Interventions will be offered that are different to or additional to those provided as part of the school's differentiated curriculum. The triggers for intervention are concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness;
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas;
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties;
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite provision of specialist equipment;
- has communication or interaction difficulties.

When any concern is initially noticed it is the responsibility of the class teacher to take steps to address the issue. Parents may be consulted and specific intervention put in place and

monitored for a period of up to 6 weeks. If no progress is noted after this time the child may be added to the school SEND register with parental permission.

The class teacher, after discussion with the SENCO, will then provide interventions that are additional to those provided as part of the school's differentiated curriculum and the child will be given individual learning targets which will be applied within the classroom. These targets will be monitored by the class teacher within the class and reviewed formally with the SENCO, parents and young person. The class teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis, but children at this stage will be given extra support from the school's resources, within the context of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The class teacher will keep parents informed and draw upon them for additional information. The IEP will show the short-term target set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. It will also indicate the planned outcomes and the date for the plan to be reviewed. In most cases, this review will take place once a term.

### **Local Offer**

The 'Local Offer' is the East Riding of Yorkshire Council's offer of Special Needs services within the local area. More information can be found on: <https://eastridinglocaloffer.org.uk/>

Lockington School's Local Offer (School information report) is a report detailing all the services, interventions and provision provided for children with SEND within the school. Please see the school website for the full report. It will be useful to read the School Information Report alongside this policy. <https://www.lockingtonprimary.co.uk/>

### **5. Individual Education Plans (IEP)**

Individual Education Plans (IEP) employ a small-steps approach and show provision/action that is additional to or different from that available to all other children in that class. An IEP is written by the child's class teacher in consultation with the SENCO, pupils and parents/carers.

The IEP will set targets for the pupil and will detail:

- Short-term targets
- Teaching strategies
- Provision to be put in place
- Success criteria and outcomes
- Review date
- Parent and child views

The IEP will be reviewed frequently by the Class Teacher and new targets will be set on a rolling basis. The SENCO will be kept aware of progress made or any barriers to progress. Parents/carers will also be asked to contribute to the target-setting and review process.

### **6. The Nature of Intervention**

The SENCO and the child's class teacher will decide on the action needed to help the child progress in the light of earlier assessments. This may include:

- Different learning materials or specialist equipment.
- Small group or individual support, which may involve being withdrawn to work with adult support.
- Interventions such as 'Toe by Toe'.

- Additional adult time to devise interventions and monitor effectiveness.
- Staff development and training to introduce more effective strategies.
- Access to the Educational Psychology Service or other support services for advice, strategies, equipment or staff training.

After initial discussions with the SENCO, the child's class teacher will be responsible for working with the child on a daily basis and ensuring delivery of any individualised programme in the classroom. Parents will continue to be consulted and kept informed of the action taken to help their child, and of the outcome of any action. Parents will be invited to meet regularly with the class teacher and SENCO and they will have specific time slots to discuss Individual Learning targets and progress with the SENCO on a termly basis.

## **7. The use of outside agencies**

We believe that where close relations with support agencies are established, children's needs are more likely to be fully met and appropriate action speedily carried out. These agencies can provide support and advice on children in general as well as on individual needs and we are committed to multi-agency working.

These services may become involved if a child continues to make little progress despite considerable input and adaptations. They will use the child's records in order to establish what strategies have already been employed and which targets have previously been set.

External support services will usually see the child, in school, so that they can advise teachers on new IEP targets and accompanying strategies, provide more specialist assessments to inform planning and the measurement of pupil progress, give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases, provide support for particular activities. The delivery of the interventions recorded in the IEP continues to be the responsibility of the class teacher.

Outside agencies may become involved if, despite receiving individualised support in school, the child:

- Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas;
- Continues working at National Curriculum levels which are substantially below that expected of children of a similar age;
- Continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematics skills;
- Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group;
- Has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits from a specialist service;
- Has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede development of social relationships and cause substantial learning barriers;
- Despite having received intervention, the child continues to fall behind the level of peers.

Parents and carers are always consulted and permission sought when consulting outside agencies.

## **8. Request for an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

If, despite an individualised programme, a child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for an EHCP will be made to the local authority. Only a very small proportion of children with SEN will require an EHCP. This decision is made in consultation with parents, the pupil (where appropriate) and support services. Requests can also be made by a parent or by referral from a support agency. If the local authority agrees that the child has educational needs that require an EHC Plan, this will be issued and IEP targets will be matched to the plan. Levels of support will be outlined in the plan which will be reviewed annually with all agencies involved with the child.

Evidence presented to the LA will include:

- previous individual education plans and targets for the pupil;
- records of regular reviews and their outcomes;
- records of the child's health and medical history when appropriate;
- national Curriculum attainment levels in English and Mathematics;
- education and other assessments, for example from an advisory specialist support teacher or educational psychologist;
- views of the parents.

The annual review of the EHCP ensures that once a year the parents, the pupil, the LA, the school and all professionals involved, consider both the progress the pupil has made and whether amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's need or to the special educational provision specified in the plan. LAs ensure that such a review is carried out within twelve months of either making the statement or of the previous review.

When the school is named in a child's EHCP, we will take every step possible to make the provision required by the statement.

## **9. Removal from the SEND Register**

Pupils may be removed from the register if they begin to make progress which shows their attainment or level of progress is no longer a cause for concern and there is evidence that this is sustainable over time without the additional level of support.

## **10. Supporting pupils with medical conditions**

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. Some may also have SEN and may have an EHCP which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. The SEND Code of Practice (2014) is followed. Arrangements will be put in place in school to support pupils at school with medical conditions in accordance with the school's policy for supporting pupils with medical conditions.

## **11. Continuous Professional Development**

To maintain and develop the quality of teaching and respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils, staff are encouraged to undertake training and other professional development activities. Professional development may be provided by outside agencies, from peer observations/tutoring, visits to other schools, etc. All teachers and support staff undertake induction on taking up a post, which includes understanding systems and structures in place



around SEND provision and practice and the needs of individual pupils. The school's SENCOs regularly attend the LAs SENCO network meetings, including local and national updates in SEND.

## **12. Allocation of resources**

We receive funding for SEND via the LA formula. When an application for an EHCP has been agreed, the LA makes what it deems to be appropriate financial support. The SENCO/Headteacher and governors are responsible for these aspects of the budget and the deployment of funding allocated for groups and individuals. The SENCO is responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special educational needs provision within the school, including provision for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans. The headteacher informs the governing body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed. (Appendix 1).

## **13. Assessment**

Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents and the SENCO at the earliest opportunity to alert them to SEND concerns and provision for Gifted and Talented pupils and enlists their active help and participation. Children with SEND may be identified through parental information, class teacher observations, records and assessments, information from other teachers and adults in the class, scrutiny of assessment data or through referrals from outside agencies. The class teacher and the SENCO assess and monitor the pupil's progress in line with existing school practices. The SENCO works closely with parents and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of support. The assessment of pupils reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCO break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators. The LA seeks a range of advice and the views of the child's parents before making a formal statement. The needs of the child are considered to be paramount in this.

## **14. Access to the curriculum**

All pupils have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable pupils to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Teachers use a range of strategies to meet pupil's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; work is differentiated appropriately, and assessment is used to inform the next stage of learning.

Individual Education Plans, which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that pupils experience success.

We support pupils in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Wherever possible, we do not withdraw pupils from the classroom situation. There are times, though, when to maximise learning, we ask the pupils to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside the classroom. If a pupil is

withdrawn from the class for support, class teachers ensure that the pupil does not miss the same activity all the time.

### **15. Partnership with parents**

Partnership plays a key role in enabling children with SEN to achieve their potential. Parents hold key information, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of their child's needs. Parents are treated as partners and given support to play an active role in their child's education. We encourage an active partnership through an on-going dialogue. We hold IEP meetings each term to share pupil progress. Parents have access to the SENCO through the school e-mail address.

The school website contains details of our SEND Policy and the SEN Information Report details the arrangements made for children in our school with special educational needs. This is linked to the LA 'Local Offer' for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

The school prospectus contains information about our policy and the arrangements made for these pupils in our school. A named governor takes a special interest in special needs. We consult with parents regarding any outside intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of pupils with special educational needs. We aim to provide information in an accessible way. We make parents aware of the Special Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) service. Should parents have concerns, they can discuss these firstly with the class teacher, then the SENCO/Head Teacher, then the SEND Governor and finally follow the Complaints Procedure if they feel that their concerns have not been addressed.

### **16. Pupil participation**

We encourage pupils to take responsibility and to make decisions. They often have a unique knowledge of their own needs and views about what sort of help they would like. They are encouraged to contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition process and to take part in IEP review meetings.

### **17. Responsibility for pupils with Special Educational Needs**

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the whole school. The governing body, the headteacher/SENCO and all other members of staff, particularly class teachers and teaching assistants, have important responsibilities. All teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs.

The Governing Body have delegated the responsibility for the day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy to the Headteacher/Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

All staff are aware of their responsibilities towards children with SEND. To meet the learning needs of all pupils, teachers differentiate work. Where pupils are identified as having SEN, the school may provide the following additional support:

- further differentiation;
- in-class support for small groups or individuals (teacher or TA);
- small group or individual support outside of the classroom (teacher or TA);
- involvement of specialist agencies;

- for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), provision in line with the recommendations on the EHCP.

**Class teacher responsibilities:**

- be accountable for the progress of all children in their class, monitoring pupils who are causing concern;
- be familiar with pupil's records and information regarding special educational needs;
- differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of SEN pupils;
- support individuals in reaching their IEP targets and, with SENCO support if necessary, write IEP's for SEN pupils in their class;
- complete a child friendly IEP each term, including SMART (Specific, Manageable, Achievable, Realistic and Times) targets;
- consult with and keep the SENCO informed of any changes to need or circumstance;
- implement the teaching needs of pupils with EHCPs, which may include the management of a special support assistant/teacher;
- assess to plan and devise specific strategies for managing pupils with SEN;
- liaise formally with parents/carers to discuss progress, IEP targets, reports from outside agencies and concerns;
- ensure that the needs of pupils with SEND are known to all who are likely to work with them within the class.

**Support staff responsibilities:**

- liaise with the pupil's class teacher and SENCO;
- carry out their duties as stated in the job description;
- wherever possible, attend reviews.

**SENCO responsibilities:**

- day-to-day operation of the policy and coordination of provision for pupils with SEND.
- maintain the SEND register and reviews provision termly;
- manage resources to enable appropriate provision for pupils with SEND;
- support and advise colleagues; contribute to the continuing professional development of all staff;
- monitor and co-ordinate the completion and implementation of Individual Learning Plans (IEP's); oversee the records of pupils with SEND;
- liaise with parents of children with SEND, external agencies and support agencies;
- attend multi-agency meetings to discuss school SEND issues and specific pupil's needs;
- make regular visits to classrooms to monitor the progress of children on the SEND register.
- monitor and evaluate the special educational needs provision and report to the governing body;
- review the SEND policy in consultation with the staff and governors.

**Headteacher responsibilities:**

- The Headteacher has responsibility for management of the provision for pupils with SEND. The Headteacher keeps the Governing Body fully informed.

**18. The role of the governing body**

The Governing Body is responsible for determining the policy and the approach to provision so the need of children with special needs are met. The Governors appoint a Governor with responsibility for SEND. The Governing Body monitors the school's work on behalf of pupils with SEND. The Headteacher has responsibility for day-to-day management of the provision for pupils with SEND. Our SEND Governor is Mrs Kate Girking.

### **19. Monitoring and evaluation**

The SENCO:

- monitors the movement of pupils within the SEND system in school;
- provides staff and governors with summaries of the impact of the policy;
- supports teachers involved in drawing up Individual Education Plans.

The SENCO and the SEND Governor:

- hold termly meetings to monitor the policy is being followed to deliver the planned outcomes;
- monitor the buildings and their facilities to ensure that they can support the provision of the curriculum to any child with SEN. Any action needed will be included in our Accessibility Plan.
- review this policy and the Accessibility Plan regularly and considers any amendments in the light of the review findings and/or any new initiatives.

The school will conduct audits including sampling parent views, pupil views and staff views. Evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils.

Please read this policy alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, More Able Policy and Inclusion Policy.

### **21. Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier as required.

Member of staff responsible: SENDCO (Julie Cattle)

Date policy written: November 2022

Date approved by full Governing Body: January 2023

Date for next review: January 2026

Signature (Head)

Signature (Chair of Governors)



Julie Cattle (09.01.23.)



Graham Parr (09.01.23.)

This policy should be reviewed annually and rewritten every three years if necessary with reference to success criteria (Appendix 2).

### **Appendix 1**

## Resources

PHYSICAL RESOURCES ARE KEPT IN THE SEN CUPBOARD WHEN NOT IN USE.

### SPEECH AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT:

- Speaking and Listening through Narrative – Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
- Attention and Listening Skills Resources
- Resources recommended by SALT to promote: articulation and productions of sounds; understanding and development of language.
- Language for Thinking

### PHONICS

- ELS resources
- Lexia
- Phonic Games
- A variety of phonic books
- A variety of games and alphabet letters
- Card games, lotto games, jigsaws
- PAT (Phonological Awareness Training)
- Toe by Toe
- Rapid Phonics
- Rapid Reading

### COMPUTER PROGRAMMES

- Nessy Reading and Spelling for children with dyslexia
- Wordshark Spelling programme
- Numbershark Maths programme
- Lexia
- Twinkl
- Purple Mash
- IXL Maths

### HANDWRITING

- Penpals
- Variety of writing aids Pencil grips, writing boards, specialist pencils and pens

### MATHS

- Developing Number Skills resources
- Variety of Maths Games
- Power of 2
- Rapid Maths
- IXL

(Resources listed are not exhaustive and may be added to at any time)

## Appendix 2

## Success Criteria for SEND policy

The following success criteria have been identified to evaluate the effectiveness of the SEN policy:

- The SEND register is updated twice yearly and communicated to the teaching staff;
- The register is up-to-date, and levels of intervention are clearly identified;
- There is movement on the register, both up and down the levels of intervention;
- Parents/carers are kept informed of their children's targets and progress, and feel involved in their children's education;
- All pupils with IEPs have termly reviews of their targets;
- All pupils with IEPs are aware of their targets;
- All IEP targets are SMART and written in accessible language;
- All teachers and support staff are aware of the SEN procedures;
- SEN need is identified early in the child's school career;
- There is evidence of SEN pupil progress over time;
- Resource needs are identified, obtained and used effectively;
- SEN issues are included in staff development training;
- All teaching staff are aware of their responsibilities with regards to SEN children;
- The SENCO has an SEN action plan;
- The Governing Body is informed on SEN developments and progress;
- Positive relationships with external outside agencies are maintained.