



SEND and LEARNING SUPPORT Policy

Review cycle: Annual

Last Review Date: Sept 2026

Next Review Date: September 2027

Staff responsible: Natalie Fox

Committee responsible: Academic Committee

(This policy applies to the whole School including EYFS)
(Willington School reserves the right to update all policies on a regular basis)



SEND AND LEARNING SUPPORT

1. This document outlines the provision made for pupils at our School with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and/or Learning Support Needs, including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). At Willington School we offer a nurturing environment to help all pupils reach their full potential. Special educational provision is defined as “being additional to and different from” that which is provided within the differentiated curriculum taught in lessons (Children And Families Act 2014).

Introduction

2. The aims of our policy and practice in relation to special educational needs and disability are:
- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a special educational need and / or a disability by taking action to increase access to the curriculum and the environment and to remove barriers to learning.
 - To ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the School alongside pupils who do not have SEND, whenever possible.
 - To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for pupils for whom this is required, to better respond to the four broad areas of need, as defined by the SEND Code of Practice (2015):
 - Communication and interaction
 - Cognition and learning
 - Social, mental and emotional health
 - Sensory/physical
 - To request, monitor and respond to the views of pupils and their parents or carer, in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership.
 - To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil’s needs, through well-targeted continuing professional development.
 - To support pupils with medical conditions to achieve full inclusion whenever possible in school activities by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals in order to meet the medical needs of pupils.
 - To work in cooperative and productive partnership with Merton and other outside agencies to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
3. We use the four broad areas of need outlined above to identify what action we need to take to support pupils, but we do not label pupils or try to fit them into categories. We understand that all pupils have a variety of needs that must be considered, and that these needs may have characteristics of the different areas of need and may change over time.

What are Special Educational Needs (SEN) or a disability?

4. We use the definitions for SEN and for Disability from the SEND Code of Practice (2015):
- Special Educational Needs:** *A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty or disability is a **significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age**. Special educational provision means **educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from**, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.*



b. Disability: *Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions.*

5. In addition, we support pupils with Learning Support Needs. This includes pupils with Specific Learning Differences (SpLDs) or gaps in their learning who may require technology such as word processing or speech to text, some further classroom differentiation, 1:1 or small group intensive lessons to close the gap between them and their peers, or further support to reach their potential. They are usually working within national academic expectations for their age.

What is our Admissions Policy with regard to SEND?

6. Prospective pupils with SEND (but without an Education, Health and Care Plan), or pupils with Learning Support Needs are welcome to apply for a place at our school, in line with our Admissions Policy. Where a pupil meets our entrance requirements, we will make every effort, in partnership with parents and carers, to provide the provision required to meet the SEND and Learning Support needs of our pupils.

7. We seek to ensure that our Admissions Policy is compliant with the Equality Act (2010) and that we make Reasonable Adjustments for our pupils.

What types of SEN do we make provision for?

8. We have pupils attending the school with SpLDs and learning challenges including, for example, ADHD, dyslexia, sensory difficulties, emotional difficulties and autistic spectrum challenges who access our curriculum in a mainstream academic setting. We do not have specific expertise in any area of SEND.

How do we identify and assess pupils who may have SEND?

9. We aim to identify pupils with SEND as early as possible and we recognise the impact of early intervention. We identify pupils falling behind age-appropriate expectations through:

- a. Admissions data and questionnaires
- b. Teacher and staff observations, assessments and marking
- c. Whole-school tracking through standardised testing in English, Mathematics, Spelling and Reading, and CAT testing
- d. Parent consultations
- e. Screening through programmes where concerns are raised
- f. Reports from Educational Psychologists or other specialists

Alongside the above, the following apply in the EYFS:

- a. Induction morning
- b. Meet the teacher occasions
- c. Baseline assessments

10. Where staff or parents have concerns that a pupil may have a SpLD or SEND, the SENDCo can signpost specialists that can assess and diagnose. School staff may raise concerns about certain aspects of learning or behaviour causing concern, but are not qualified to diagnose.



11. Our SENDCo carries out informal assessments that indicate patterns that may be related to specific learning difficulties, but she does not diagnose.

12. We understand that some pupils may have undiagnosed SEND and we monitor progress and achievement, as well as seek to identify under-achievement.

What should parents do if they think that their child may have SEND?

13. If parents have any concerns about their child's progress, they should make an appointment to see their class or form tutor, or specific subject specialist teacher in the first instance. This may result in a referral to the SENDCo. Parents may also contact the SENDCo directly if they would prefer.

Who is the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) and how can she be contacted? What qualifications do staff responsible for SEND hold?

14. Our SENDCo is Natalie Fox. Natalie Fox has completed the National Award for SEN Co-ordination (NASENCO), and is a qualified teacher. She is at School part-time (4 days) and available for meetings, both formal and informal. Please contact: natalie.fox@willingtonschool.co.uk.

15. The SENDCo can signpost private specialists and professionals that have been recommended by parents of other pupils at the school, or parents may choose to consult NHS professionals. Teachers at our school do not diagnose SEND.

What is our approach to teaching pupils with SEND?

16. The aim of the School is to provide a rounded education for children aged 3-11. The Pre-Prep (Nursery - Year 2) and Prep School (Year 3 and Year 4) have an inclusive ethos and a class teacher based structure. Years 5 and 6 are form-group based, to prepare pupils for the rigorous demands of academic selection at 11+. We endeavour to provide personalised learning to suit the children's needs.

17. Pupils with SEND and/or SpLDs are fully included in the school community. The School offers a rich curriculum and varied extra-curricular choices so that all pupils are given many opportunities to find what they excel at and enjoy. Pupils with SEND or SpLDs are widely represented in school life, such as on the School Council, in sports teams, in drama productions, music recitals, as well as the scholarship programme.

18. All pupils at our School benefit from high quality teaching in small classes, where all teachers are responsible for the progress of the pupils in their classes in accordance with SEND Code of Practice 2015. Lessons are differentiated and aim to provide support and challenge for all pupils. Additionally, specialist teaching and the deployment of teaching assistants where allocated, ensure a high level of teaching, learning and participation. In general, our lessons are pitched at or above National Curriculum expectations, to meet the requirements of the academic selection process, especially in Years 5 and 6.

19. Some pupils, including some of those with SEND or SpLDs, find this a challenging environment. In collaboration with the SENDCo and the Headmaster, parents may choose to opt their child out of some of the academic challenges by arranging entrance to non-selective secondary schools for their child. This is arranged on an individual basis.

20. Parents' views are welcomed and listened to. Parents are kept informed where regular individual provision is made for pupils that is not the same as for the rest of the class, and this is recorded on the School's Provision Map. Pupils with recognised SEND or awaiting an assessment for an area of need outlined above are recorded on the School's SEND and Learning Support Register. We try to involve pupils in decisions about their learning as much as possible.

21. We follow a 3 step approach to managing SEND and Learning Support.



STEP 1: High Quality Teaching for all pupils, with targeted interventions when beneficial:

- a. Learning is personalised in small class sizes.
- b. Teachers use adaptation to personalise learning. This may include:
 - (1) Allowing pupils to work on different tasks within the same topic.
 - (2) Having a range of different guided options for pupils to undertake.
 - (3) Allowing pupils to interpret tasks at different levels.
 - (4) Measuring the pupil's work against personal, rather than class, expectations.
 - (5) Recording children's work in a different way, such as peer or adult scribing, use of a laptop, and photography.
- c. Teaching Assistants support pupils in Reception - Year 2 (may vary each year).
- d. Teachers plan using pupils' achievement levels, differentiating and adapting tasks which ensure progress. Teachers use an approach which correlates with the 'graduated approach' for pupils with SEND, who need provision additional to or different from their peers. Decisions and actions are re-visited, refined and revised formally and informally. Pupils with Learning Support needs who are making expected progress have their needs met within the classroom through high quality teaching.
- e. The quality of classroom teaching provided is monitored through a number of processes including:
 - (1) classroom observation by the Heads of Department and the Senior Leadership Team.
 - (2) ongoing assessment of progress, both formative and summative.
 - (3) work sampling and scrutiny of planning to ensure effective matching of work to pupil need.
 - (4) teacher meetings with the SENDCo to provide advice and guidance on meeting the needs of pupils with SEND.
 - (5) pupil and parent feedback.
 - (6) attendance and behaviour records.
- g. Where pupils are identified as needing further intervention to close the gap to their peers or to meet their potential, further strategies may be put in place. These may include those suggested by the class teacher, the SENDCo and/or external specialists, including Educational Psychologists.

STEP 2: Specialist Intervention:

- a. For pupils with Learning Support needs or SpLDs, 1:1 and 1:2 lessons are available with the SENDCo during school time. Pupils are selected for support on a termly basis depending on pupil need, which is based on teacher observation and tracking of pupils' performance in class or in testing. Parents and pupils may also request support.
- b. Further services provided by specialists at the School, at extra cost to parents, include Speech Therapy, Dyslexia Tuition and Occupational Therapy (OT).
- c. Technological and learning aids are welcomed. These are usually supplied, maintained and insured by parents or hired from external providers (eg. CENMAC).
- d. Teachers will meet with specialists when necessary and use their best endeavours to apply recommendations from private assessments and advice from our visiting specialists, specialist reports, and the Learning Support/SpLD teacher. However, sometimes these are not compatible with the effective teaching and learning of the rest of the class and cannot be reasonably accommodated due to restrictions on our resources.



STEP 3: SEND and EHCP Process:

Where a pupil has SEND (as outlined in the introduction), action relating to interventions will be formalised on an individual basis. The SENDCo will support parents with EHCP applications as necessary.

22. Alongside the above 3 steps, the following apply in the EYFS:

- a. A baseline assessment is undertaken within the first 6 weeks of a child joining Reception.
- b. Entry at EYFS: Usual practice is that all children visit the school and meet the Head of Pre Prep as well as seeking a Nursery reference. A number of events are arranged prior to joining to help children familiarise themselves with their new teachers and peers, whenever possible.
- c. Parents are informed of any concerns and permission is requested to investigate e.g. observation by SENDCo, Speech and Language Therapist, or academic support teacher. They are asked to arrange hearing tests, OT assessment etc., outside of school if we think it would be helpful.
- d. Where necessary, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be drawn up, either by the class teacher, or the specialist involved. The SMART targets information will be used in compiling this. For some pupils, a risk assessment may also be compiled. Targets set by specialists should be shared with children's class teachers to help progress, where relevant.
- e. For pupils not making expected progress, small intervention groups are delivered by the class TA.

23. SEND and Inclusion in the EYFS are audited by Merton.

How do we enable pupils with SEND to engage in activities with other pupils who do not have SEND?

24. We strive for inclusion in all areas of the curriculum and this is undertaken in the following ways:

- a. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable all pupils to participate in all School activities whenever possible.
- b. As needed, the School aims to ensure sufficient staff expertise to maximise participation.
- c. Where necessary, advice is sought from external professionals on a subject-by-subject basis.

What support is in place for pupils with Medical Needs?

25. Pupils with medical conditions have Individual Healthcare Plans compiled in partnership with parents, the school Matron, and when necessary, the SENDCo and/or medical professionals. The School Matron administers medicines and maintains the database of medical needs.

How do we consult parents of pupils with SEND/Learning Support needs and involve them in their child's education?

26. We value the contributions and expertise of parents. Parents may raise concerns with class, subject and form teachers, the SENDCo or a member of the Leadership Team at any time. Meetings with teachers, the SENDCo and the SLT can be scheduled as necessary. Staff liaise with external specialists.

27. Where IEPs and targets for Specialist lessons are written for pupils, these are shared and reviewed with parents and carers on a termly basis.

28. The SENDCo signposts support services for parents and carers through Merton or privately. Information events are offered periodically at school for parents.

29. Class or subject teachers may suggest additional ways of helping pupils to progress.



How do we consult pupils with SEND and involve them in their education?

30.
 - a. Pupils are taught to review their own learning and to self-assess their progress.
 - b. Pupils may be given key strategies, such as in a mentoring session.
 - c. The SENDCo has an open-door policy for all pupils who wish to discuss any challenges they are experiencing.

How do we assess progress and evaluate the effectiveness of our SEND/Learning Support provision?

31. Pupil progress is assessed using standardised testing, alongside teacher and self-assessment, valuing pupil voice, along with parent and carer feedback.
32. Pupils with IEPs and pupils seeing the Learning Support/SpLD Teacher for specialist teaching have SMART targets that are reviewed termly and shared with parents.

How do we support pupils moving between different phases of education?

33. On Entry to Willington Prep:
 - a. Entry at EYFS: Usual practice is that all prospective pupils are visited at their home or Nursery setting and a number of events are arranged prior to joining to help pupils familiarise themselves with their new teachers and peers, whenever possible. Meetings with Nursery and Reception teachers, the Deputy Head and/or the SENDCo can be arranged if necessary.
 - b. Entry at other points is through the School's Admission process, outlined in the Admissions Policy.
 - c. We request that any information that would help put the best support in place be disclosed by parents and previous schools as soon as possible.
 - d. We suggest that, for all pupils joining our School with SEND, parents make an appointment with the SENDCo without delay.
34. On Exit from Willington Prep:
 - a. Our normal exit point is 11+:
 - (1) Our Headmaster meets with parents to assist with choosing and applying for an appropriate secondary school, usually when the pupil is in Year 5.
 - (2) At 11+, the SENDCo will reply to any requests from future schools for confirmation of a history of need and the usual way of working for Access Arrangements in exams. Access Arrangements will be agreed by schools applied to, following requests from parents for arrangements in the school application. Parents are advised to follow up with both the destination school and the SENDCo at Willington Prep to ensure that these are in place. Willington Prep does not liaise with future schools regarding SEND on behalf of parents except where destination schools contact the SENDCo in response to an application made by parents. We advise parents who are unsure about what information to share with future schools to make an appointment with the SENDCo to discuss this further.
 - (3) The SENDCo liaises with the SENDCos at future schools to ensure smooth transition, where needed.
 - (4) Any records requested will be promptly shared to ensure a smooth transition.
 - (5) Transition meetings with future school staff can be arranged.
 - (6) We welcome staff from future schools who wish to visit pupils at Willington as part of their transition process.



- (7) Accompanied visits to future schools may be arranged, as appropriate.
- b. For SEND pupils or those with SpLDs leaving at another time, the last 5 points above apply.
- c. The SENDCo will also liaise with external professionals, specialists and Council representatives to ensure effective transition.

How do we support pupils with SEND to improve their emotional and social development and wellbeing?

- 35. **PSHCEE:** Our comprehensive Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCEE) and Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) curriculum aims to provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to enhance their emotional and social wellbeing. We use the PSHE Association programme in conjunction with visiting specialists and speakers.
- 36. **Pastoral Support:** In Reception to Year 4, class teachers monitor pupils and mentor the pupils in their classes. Years 5 and 6 have form teachers who are vigilant to ensure that pupils are given the support they require. The Deputy Head oversees this.
- 37. **Medical Support:** The School has a Matron who manages medicines and administers First Aid. Where pupils with Medical Conditions have Academic, Social or Emotional Needs, the SENDCo contributes to the relevant sections of the Individual Healthcare Plan and arranges support as necessary. This includes exam access arrangements, where relevant.
- 38. **Mental Health:** The School has an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) to support children's mental health.
- 39. **Behaviour Management:** Pupils with SEND or Learning Support needs are celebrated through the positive reinforcement behaviour management systems (House Points) without prejudice. Communications take into account the needs of the pupils. Some pupils with SEND, or SpLDs are exempted from some of the behaviour management strategies employed by the school, where relevant. (see behaviour policy)
- 40. **Anti-Bullying:** The school does not tolerate bullying. The Child Protection Team runs anti-bullying initiatives. CPD programmes recognize the importance of regular Anti-bullying training for teachers. Please refer to the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- 41. **Safeguarding:** Our Safeguarding Policy recognises that pupils with SEND are additionally vulnerable.
- 42. **Parent Support:** Parents can access Tool Up Education by Dr Kathy Weston for continuous support throughout the year. Dr Weston has in a small number of cases given individual support to parents of children with SEND. Where appropriate, parents are encouraged to participate in local support groups. Parents are encouraged to make contact with the SENDCo for advice when needed.

How do we secure specialist expertise?

- 43. The SENDCo signposts services and professionals that have been consulted and recommended by parents at the school. Parents can also contact their GP for referrals through the NHS for assessments.
- 44. We work with external specialists and facilitate private sessions on the School premises, such as OT, SaLT and Dyslexia Tutors.
- 45. We accommodate pupils who may need to be educated off-site for part of the School week. We do not recommend that pupils who have this arrangement try to catch up on all the work missed at Willington Prep, but parents may request to arrange parallel lessons at a convenient time. Any such arrangements must be discussed with the SENDCo and agreed with the Headmaster.



46. We consult a number of specialists who may visit the School.

How do we secure equipment and facilities to support pupils with SEND?

47. The School does not receive any SEND funding from the Local Authority, or Pupil Premium, aside from specific support through the EHCP provision or the MSSS. Most equipment specific to certain pupils, for example laptops, are supplied and maintained by parents. For those pupils with the most complex needs, funding may be allocated through the EHCP process.

How do we handle complaints from parents of pupils with SEN/Learning Support about provision made at the School?

48. Willington Prep prides itself on the quality of the teaching and pastoral care provided to its pupils. However, if parents do have a complaint, they can expect it to be treated by the School with care and in accordance with our Parents' Complaints Policy. Willington Prep makes its complaints procedure available to all parents on the School's website and it is also available on request from the School Office. The School seeks to ensure that parents are made aware that this document is published and available to them.

Where can Merton's local offer be found?

49. Willington Prep does not contribute to the Local Offer. The local Offer can be found here: <https://directories.merton.gov.uk/kb5/merton/directory/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>

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Reviewed by: SENDCo