

Vallis First School

Special Educational Needs and Disability policy



Approved by the Governing Body of Vallis First School

Date: Autumn 2024

Proposed Review Date: October 2026

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, and following any concerns and/or updates to national/local guidance or procedures

Our Ethos/ Vision

At Vallis First School we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to ‘...be the best they can be.’ The achievement, attitude and well-being of every child matters and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone within our school. Every teacher is a teacher of every pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. We respect the unique contribution which every individual can make to our school community.

We provide a learning environment that enables all pupils to make the greatest possible progress and achieve their full potential in a caring, supportive and fully inclusive environment. We are committed to narrowing the gap between SEND and non-SEND pupils through the early identification of SEND which is achieved in a collaborative process between the school and the parents/guardians and allows for a full understanding of the pupil. The school has high expectations for pupils with SEND. Timely and effective provision is put into place through quality first teaching and reasonable adjustments as well as short-term specific interventions that are delivered in a group or on an individual basis. The educational provision that we provide for pupils with SEND is a matter for the school as a whole.

Definition of SEN and Disability (SEND)

At our school we use the definition for SEN and for disability from the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015). This states:

*SEN: 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.*

*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.**’*

Key Roles and Responsibilities

Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo):

The SENCo has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEND, including those who have EHC plans. Our SENCo is **Io Fox**.

SEN Governor:

Our SEN Governor is **Iestyn Lewis**, who is one of our Local Authority governors. He has responsibility for monitoring policy implementation and liaising between the SENCO and the Governing Body as well as ensuring that children with SEND participate fully in school activities.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

Our Deputy Headteacher, Tracey Messenger, has specific responsibility for safeguarding and is the DSL as well as the Designated Teacher for Looked After Children.

Aims and Objectives

Aims:

At Vallis First School all children, regardless of their particular needs, are provided with inclusive teaching which will enable them to make the best possible progress and feel that they are a valued member of the wider school community. We expect that all children with SEND will meet or exceed the high expectations we set for them against national data and based on their age and starting points. We will use our best endeavours to give children with SEND the support they need, whilst having access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Working in partnership with families, it is our aim that children will become confident individuals able to make a successful transition on to the next phase of their education.

Objectives:

- To ensure a clear process for identifying, assessing, planning, providing and reviewing for SEND children with the children and their parents/carers at the centre.
- To develop effective whole school provision management of support for children with special educational needs and disabilities.
- To deliver training and support for all staff working with children with SEND in order to develop our practice within the guidance set out in the Code of Practice.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#) and the following legislation and Green paper:

- Part 3 of the [Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- The [Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEND information report.
- [SEND Review Summary document 2022](#)

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Identification of Needs:

The identification of SEN is embedded in the whole school process of monitoring the progress and development of all children. We recognise the benefits of early identification and making effective provision in improving the long-term outcomes for children with SEN. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit the pupil into a category. It is also important to identify the full range of needs, not simply the primary need of an individual pupil.

The SENCO works closely within the senior leadership team, using whole school tracking data as an early identification indicator. We use a number of additional indicators of special educational needs:

- the analysis of data, including entry profiles at FS2 baseline and end of FS data, phonics data, annual and termly pupil assessments
- the use of our local authority SEN criteria
- the following up of teacher concerns, which our teachers at Vallis record using our Watch and Wait forms
- following up parental concerns

- tracking individual pupil progress over time – discussed at our termly Pupil Progress meetings
- information from previous schools on transfer
- information from other services

The SENCO maintains a list of pupils identified through the procedures listed and is reviewed each term when a detailed analysis of the list takes place alongside the updating of APDR targets and Watch and Wait interventions have completed a 6-week cycle. For some pupils a more in-depth individual assessment may be undertaken by the school or other educational or health professionals.

Access to the curriculum for ALL pupils

All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is adapted where needed to enable them to:

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

How do we do this?

- Access learning through a range of strategies that meet pupils' special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; work is adapted appropriately, and assessment is used to inform the next stage of learning.
- Our SEND passports, 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 achievable targets, whilst constantly considering each child as an individual learner, we ensure that children experience success.
- At Vallis we support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. In order to maximise learning there are times when this will include the children working in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation outside of the classroom.
- For children with Autism at Vallis, staff are supported and trained to adapt learning and expected progress to each individual pupil based on their ability and needs.

The Code of Practice refers to four broad areas of need:

Communication and interaction - These children have a difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. For example, children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD), including Asperger syndrome, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and learning - Children with learning difficulties learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs from moderate learning difficulties (MLD) to children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties - Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect

underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder.

Sensory and/or physical needs - Some children require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. Many children with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.

A Graduated Approach to SEN Support

How the school decides whether to make special educational provision:

A process of on-going teacher assessments and termly pupil progress meetings (PPMs) with the leadership team and phase coordinator identifies those children making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. The school's first response is high quality targeted teaching by the class teacher. Where progress continues to be less than expected, the class teacher will discuss their concerns at subsequent PPMs or with the SENCO if earlier discussion is needed.

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside the views of parents/carers and pupil. During this stage extra teaching or interventions may be put in place as a pupil's response to such support can help to identify their particular needs.

Particular care is taken when identifying and assessing SEN for children whose first language is not English.

Where children have higher levels of need, and with parental permission, the school may seek advice from external agencies. These agencies include:

- Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- The Virtual School and Learning Support Team
- Integrated Therapy Service (SALT, OT)
- Access to Inclusion Team (A2I)
- Autism and Communication Service
- Physical Impairment & Medical Service
- Parents and Family Support Advisor (PFSA)
- Hearing Support Team
- Vision Support Team
- School Nurse/Paediatric health team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

If the support needed can be provided by adapting the school's core offer then a child might not be considered SEN or placed on the SEN register. If, however, the support required is *different from or additional to* what is ordinarily offered by the school, the child will be placed on the SEN register at SEN Support. The school will then seek to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This begins a cycle of *assess, plan, do, review* with the child/young person at the centre of the process. A pupil file will be started, which includes a one page personal profile summarising need, provision and targeted outcomes. The paperwork is updated as more is understood about the child's SEN, including their response to interventions. Where a child's need are complex and after a series of assess, plan, do, review cycles an SEND Support Review may be held.



The four part cycle

Assess: We will ensure that we regularly assess all children's needs so that each child's progress and development is carefully tracked compared to their peers and national expectations. We will listen to the views and experience of parents/carers and the pupil. In some cases we will draw on assessments and guidance from other education professionals e.g. Educational Psychologists (EP) and from health and social services.

Plan: Where SEN Support is required the teacher and SENCO, in consultation with parents, will put together a plan outlining the adjustments, interventions and support which will be put in place for the pupil as well as the expected impact on progress and outcomes, including a date when this will be reviewed. Actions for the pupil will be set in agreement with parents/carers. The plan is shared with the pupil and all staff who work with the pupil.

Do: The class teacher is responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis. She/he will also liaise closely with TAs or specialists who provide support set out in the plan and monitor the progress being made. The SENCO will provide support, guidance and advice for the teacher.

Review: The plan including the impact of the support and interventions will be reviewed regularly by the teacher, SENCO, parent/carer and the pupil. This will inform the planning of next steps for a further period or where successful the removal of the pupil from SEN Support.

This four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the child's needs and what supports the child in making good progress is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches and more specialist expertise in successive cycles.

Parents/carers and pupil involvement in the process

We believe in a person-centred approach to information gathering and the cycle of *assess, plan, do, review*. Regular reviews and target setting meetings are planned and parents invited to attend. Planned outcomes

are monitored and successes are celebrated. Children's views on their successes and areas for future development are represented in the process.

SEN Provision

SEN support can take many forms. This could include:

- an individual learning programme; known as a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) or Personalised Planning
- evidence based interventions (such as ILI or Nurture Provision)
- extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant
- making or changing materials, resources or equipment
- working with a child in a small group
- maintaining specialist equipment
- observing a child in class or at break and keeping a log of behaviour
- helping a child to take part in the class activities
- making sure that a child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult
- helping other children to work with a child, or play with them at break time
- supporting a child with physical or personal care difficulties, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing
- access to a specialist provision at another school eg Critchill Special School

Managing the needs of Children on the SEN Register

Each pupil with SEND is an individual and their planned provision is tailored to meet their particular needs. Personal Profiles, which document the children's planned provision against their identified needs and desired outcomes, are reviewed regularly with parents and children. Decisions regarding the level of support provided are needs led, working within the constraints of the school budget.

The class teacher is responsible for:

- the progress and development of all children including those with SEND
- ensuring the plan is implemented in the classroom
- regular liaison with parents and the SENCO
- effective deployment of additional adults
- Identifying on class planning the provision they are making for children with SEND
- Supporting the SENCO in the writing and reviewing of targets for children with SEND

Special Needs Assistants are responsible for:

- ensuring that day to day provision is in place for the children they support
- implementing agreed strategies and programmes, and advice from specialists.
- record keeping
- resources
- ensuring specialist equipment is maintained as agreed
- regular communication with class teacher and SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- the SEND policy and its implementation
- co-ordinating support for children with SEND
- updating the SEN register and maintaining individual pupil records
- monitoring the quality of provision and impact of interventions
- attending network meetings and updating staff
- referrals to and liaison with outside agencies
- line managing TAs with responsibility for SEND
- liaising with and advising staff
- maintaining regular liaison with parents/carers
- co-ordinating Personal Profile Reviews, SEND Support Reviews and Annual Reviews
- supporting staff in identifying children with SEN
- mapping provision throughout the school
- maintaining links and information sharing with receiving schools

Involvement of pupils

We recognise that all pupils have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice (SEN Code of Practice). Where appropriate all pupils are involved in monitoring and reviewing their progress.

At Vallis, we endeavour to fully involve all pupils by encouraging them to:

- state their views about their education and learning, which forms their one-page passport overview
- identify their own needs (self-assessment and self-evaluation, Assessment for Learning)
- share in individual target setting across the curriculum
- self-review their progress and set new targets

In addition, pupils who are identified as having SEND are invited to participate in:

- Provision Map reviews and setting of individual targets – Individual Passports
- Regular meetings with named adults and reviewed with parents following 6-week cycles
- Annual reviews

Criteria for removing children from the SEN Register

When a child has made sufficient and sustained progress towards achieving their personal targets and it is felt that they are able to maintain this with quality first teaching, they may be removed from the SEN register. The school will continue to monitor children recently removed from the register to ensure good progress is maintained.

Requesting an Educational, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

A small number of children, whose needs are complex and long term, may require a greater level of support than that provided at SEN Support from the school's own resources. For these children a request will be made to the local authority to assess education, health and care needs. This may result in an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan being provided. This brings together the child's health and social care needs as well as their special educational needs.

[\(See Somerset guidance on the Somerset website for further information regarding requests for EHC plans\)](#)

Education, Care and Health Plans

An EHCP will normally be provided where, after a Statutory Assessment, the LA considers the pupil requires provision beyond that offered by the school. However, the school recognises that a request for a Statutory Assessment does not inevitably lead to an EHCP.

An EHCP will include details of learning objectives for the child. These are used to develop targets that are:

- Matched to the longer-term objectives set in the EHCP
- Of shorter term
- Established through parental/pupil consultation
- Set out in a Provision Map
- Implemented in the classroom
- Delivered by the class teacher with appropriate additional support where specified

Reviews of an EHCP

EHCPs must be reviewed annually. The LA will inform the Headteacher at the beginning of each school term of the pupils requiring reviews. The SENCO will organise these reviews and invite:

- The pupil's parent
- The pupil if appropriate
- The relevant teacher
- A representative of the SEN Inclusion and Assessment Team
- The Educational Psychologist
- Any other person the SENCO or parent/carer considers appropriate

The Aim of the Review

- Assess the pupil's progress in relation to the objectives on the EHCP
- Review the provision made to meet the pupil's need as identified in the EHCP Page 9 of 13
- Consider the appropriateness of the existing EHCP in relation to the pupil's performance during the year, and whether to cease, continue, or amend it
- If appropriate to set new objectives for the coming year

Supporting parents/carers and children

We provide support in the following ways:

- the Headteacher and SENCO operate an 'open door' policy for parents/carers seeking support and advice.
- our Parent and Family Support Advisor (PFSA) Joel Ayliffe
- PFSA can signpost additional support/information available for families
- our ELSA Leader (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) Ali Sturgess
- the dedicated SEN Governor who is available as a contact point
- individual arrangements can be made for phased entry into Reception class
- additional time and special arrangements for SATs
- support for transition between classes
- a transition group for vulnerable Y4 children transferring to middle school

- inviting the SENCO of the receiving middle school to the final Annual Review in Year 4
- regular review meetings to update on concerns and celebrate success

Supporting children at school with medical conditions

The school recognises that children with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Where it is the case that a medical condition meets the criteria of disability the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. *Reasonable adjustments* will always be made to promote access to all areas of the school curriculum for children with a disability, e.g. an extra adult to accompany a child on a school trips/residential

Specific staff have training to support particular needs e.g.: Autism awareness training, whilst all our staff at Vallis have had specialist CPD in supporting Autism at Vallis (October 2024).

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the administration and monitoring of medicines and health care plans/protocols. Please see the Supporting Children with Medical Needs policy for more information.

Monitoring and evaluation of SEN

The Senior Leadership Team regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of provision for all children. The school aims to use interventions in school that have proven outcomes and are evidence based. The impact of SEN provision on the progress and outcomes for children on the SEN register is measured through:

- analysis of pupil tracking data and test results at pupil progress meetings
- progress against national data and based on their age and starting points
- interventions baseline and exit data
- progress against individual targets
- children's work and interviews
- regular reviews which collect the observations of the key staff working with the child

The SENCO maps provision for each class. Decisions are made as to whether specific interventions are proving to be effective in terms of impact, time spent on them and the finance used in providing them. Each term we review the needs of the cohort and if necessary, make changes to our provision.

Training and development

Training needs are identified in response to the needs of children currently on the SEN register. School staff have specific training and expertise in speech and language, literacy and numeracy interventions and supporting children with SEMH needs, autism and diabetes. The SENCO attends network meetings to share good practice with colleagues in the Frome Learning Partnership and keeps up to date with SEND developments.

Storing and Managing Information

Children's records and SEN information may be shared with staff working closely with SEN children to enable them to better meet the individual child's needs. We are grateful to parents for their information sharing and openness and respect their confidentiality. Children's SEN files are kept in a filing cabinet in the SENCO Room. Individual Pupil Profiles are circulated amongst the staff who work closely with the child who is named

on the Profile. Each classroom has a SEND File, in which relevant information about the children in the class is stored. Individual SEN files are transferred to receiving schools when children leave Vallis First School.

Complaints

We urge parents/carers with any concerns regarding the SEN policy or the provision made for their child at Vallis First School to speak to us as soon as possible. In the first instance, please speak to the class teacher or the SENCO. If parents/carers feel their child's needs are still not being met they should make an appointment to see the head teacher.

If concerns are still unresolved parents may wish to use the Somerset Information, Advice and Support Service for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SENDIAS) (formerly Parent Partnership) or engage with the School complaints procedures.