

SEND Policy



WILLINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Policy on Special Educational Needs (SEN)

1. Introduction

As a school, this is our definition of Special Educational Needs:

Children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational needs provision to be made for them.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision **that is additional to, or different from**, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream school.

Children have a learning difficulty if they

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Have a disability that prevent or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.

These difficulties may be sensory, cognitive, physical, social or emotional and some students may have complex needs, which cover a range of difficulties. This policy aims to address the needs of these pupils.

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

The Disability Discrimination Act identifies the fact that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children defined as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes, for example, Policy on SEN may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Disability Discrimination Act. We will assess each child as required, and make the appropriate provision, based on their identified needs.

This policy has been reviewed and updated in line with the new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2014 and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- The Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice (2014)
- The SEND Information Report
 - Equality Statement
 - Equality Information and Objectives
 - Accessibility Plan
 - Medical Needs Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
 - Safeguarding Policy

2. Rationale

At Willington Primary School, we are committed to the **equal inclusion of all pupils in all areas of school life**. We recognise the diverse and individual needs of all of our pupils and take into account the additional support required by those children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). We recognise that all pupils are entitled to a **broad, balanced and developmentally appropriate curriculum** that will enable them to thrive and achieve their potential.

We believe in positive intervention, removing barriers to learning, raising expectations and levels of achievement and working in partnership with parents, extended families, pupils and other agencies. This allows us to provide a positive educational experience for all our pupils, including those with a special educational need or disability.

We aim to provide a safe and caring learning environment where all children can enjoy learning, experience success, increase their self-respect and aspire to reach their full potential. Children are at the heart of our school, and we take great pride in developing our pupils to be the best that they can be.

3. Aims

At Willington Primary school, we aim:

- To follow the guidelines set out in the SEN Code of Practice.
- To identify if a child has any special educational needs or disabilities as early as possible.
- To make appropriate provision to overcome barriers to learning and ensure pupils with SEND have full access to our broad and balanced curriculum.
- To work in partnership with parents, carers and pupils, seeking their views in developing learning outcomes and suitable provision for each child.
 - To use a graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review to provide effective provision and support for children with SEND.
- To create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child.
- To provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside their peers.
- To support the positive development of every child's emotional and mental wellbeing as we believe that high levels of wellbeing are associated with improved academic outcomes.
- To raise staff awareness of, and expertise with, SEND through continuous training and development.
- To work closely with other professionals and agencies, outside support services and other schools.

4. Inclusive Practice and Access to Learning

At Willington Primary School, we are committed to providing an inclusive learning environment where every child is valued and supported to achieve their full potential. We aim to offer excellence and choice for all pupils, regardless of their abilities or additional needs. We recognise that children learn and develop in different ways and at different rates, and we work proactively to remove

barriers to learning and participation. Our intent is that all pupils feel confident, included and part of our school community.

Through high-quality, adaptive teaching and an ambitious curriculum, we acknowledge that pupils may:

- have varied educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different strategies for learning
- acquire, process and communicate information at different rates
- benefit from a range of teaching approaches, experiences and resources

Teachers use accurate assessment and ongoing formative information to identify pupils' strengths and needs, enabling them to adapt teaching effectively. This includes:

- setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound learning outcomes with pupils and their parents
- regularly reviewing progress towards these outcomes
- using a range of learning styles and multisensory teaching approaches
- planning opportunities for full participation in practical and physical activities
- adapting or providing additional resources or support when needed
- deploying support staff effectively to promote progress
- developing pupils' independence, resilience and self-regulation
- supporting pupils to manage their behaviour and emotions so they can participate safely and successfully in learning

All pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We ensure that learning is relevant, purposeful and adapted so pupils experience success and feel a sense of achievement. Teachers use clear learning objectives, adaptive teaching methods and assessment information to inform next steps. While we follow the National Curriculum, alternative assessment tools such as PIVATS and the Pre-Key Stage Standards are used when appropriate to support planning and to track small-step progress.

Support Plans using a graduated, smallsteps approach play an important role in the provision for some pupils. By breaking down learning into carefully sequenced targets, we enable pupils to make meaningful progress and experience success. Wherever possible, pupils with SEND are supported within the classroom alongside their peers to ensure they access shared learning opportunities. However, targeted small group or 1:1 sessions may take place outside the classroom when this will maximise learning.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole.

The following are the main contacts for SEND at Willington Primary School:

- Mrs Emma Barnett is the designated Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo)
- Mrs Katie Harker is the Head Teacher
- Mrs Kelly Armstrong is our designated SEND Governor

Roles and Responsibilities with regard to SEND are designated in the following way:

The SENCo will:

- Work with the headteacher and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Work with the headteacher and governing body to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues.
- Work with staff, parents, carers and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Contribute to the professional development of all staff.
- Track the progress of pupils with SEND and ensure the implementation of a provision map.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.

Class teachers will:

- Promote an **inclusive classroom culture** where diversity is valued and all pupils feel safe, respected, and able to participate.
- Set ambitious expectations for all pupils and adapt teaching, resources, approaches and learning environments to ensure every learner can participate meaningfully and make progress.
- Review the progress and development of **every** pupil in their class.
- Use ongoing assessment to identify barriers, adjust teaching, and track progress against personalised targets.
- Write Short Notes or termly SEN Support Plans, setting specific, measurable, achievable and realistic and timed learning (SMART) outcomes/targets with the child and their parents.
- Implement and review Short Notes, SEN support plans, EHCP outcomes, and agreed strategies consistently.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers to review progress, seek their views and provide regular updates on provision and support.
- Work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Work closely with the SENCO and external professionals to implement recommended strategies and interventions, review progress and decide on any changes to provision.

- Engage in ongoing professional development to strengthen inclusive practice and stay informed about statutory responsibilities
- Support pupils' emotional regulation and wellbeing, using proactive strategies and predictable routines.
- Implement behaviour expectations consistently, using approaches that are trauma-informed, relational, and adapted where necessary.
- Follow the SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act, and school policies to ensure legal compliance.
- Record and report concerns promptly, following safeguarding and SEND procedures

The headteacher will:

- Promote a whole-school culture of high expectations and inclusion, ensuring pupils with SEND are valued, supported, and able to achieve positive outcomes.
- Provide strategic leadership for SEND, ensuring that the school's vision, policies, and improvement plans reflect a strong commitment to inclusive practice.
- Work closely with the SENCO to develop, implement, and evaluate SEND provision, ensuring it meets the needs of pupils and aligns with statutory guidance.
- Ensure the SENCO is supported, empowered, and appropriately resourced, including time, training, and staffing to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.
- Oversee the quality of teaching and learning for pupils with SEND, ensuring adaptive teaching is embedded across the school.
- Monitor the progress, attainment, attendance, and wellbeing of pupils with SEND, using this information to drive improvement and address emerging needs.
- Ensure the school meets all statutory duties, including the SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act, and responsibilities relating to EHCPs and accessibility planning.
- Ensure effective deployment of funding, including the notional SEND budget and any additional resources, to secure high-quality provision.
- Foster strong communication and collaboration with parents and carers, ensuring their views are valued and they are involved in decision-making.
- Promote professional development for all staff, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Ensure SEND is considered in all strategic decisions, including curriculum design, staffing, CPD, and resource allocation.
- Report regularly to the governing body on the effectiveness of SEND provision, strengths, challenges, and priorities for improvement.

The SEND governor

The governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs. The governing body has identified a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs.

The send governor will:

- Champion high expectations for pupils with SEND, ensuring that inclusion is central to the school's vision, culture, and strategic priorities.
- Work collaboratively with the headteacher and SENCO to shape and oversee the strategic development of the school's SEND policy and provision.
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision across the school, ensuring it meets statutory requirements and reflects the SEND Code of Practice.
- Ensure the governing body fulfils its legal duties, including compliance with the Equality Act and accessibility planning.
- Review the quality, accessibility, and impact of SEND provision, including how well pupils with SEND access the curriculum and make progress.
- Meet regularly with the SENCO to discuss provision, funding, staffing, training, and emerging needs.
- Ensure resources and funding (including the notional SEND budget) are used effectively to meet identified needs.
- Support and challenge leaders to ensure SEND remains a whole-school responsibility, not solely the SENCO's.
- Provide regular updates to the full governing body on SEND provision, strengths, challenges, and priorities for improvement.
- Ensure SEND is considered in all strategic decisions, including curriculum design, staffing, CPD, and resource allocation.

6. Identification and Assessment of Children with SEND

The Special Educational Needs (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) provides guidance on the duties of schools, local authorities and others working with children who have SEND.

The Code sets out four areas of SEN:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs

A pupil may have needs in just one of these areas, or they may present with more complex profiles where needs span across two or more areas of SEND.

Early identification is vital. Some of the children who join us have already been in early education. In some cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can aim to identify any special educational needs or disabilities as early as possible. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children. We use several methods to identify children with SEND.

- Observations and on-going formative assessments

- PIVATS
- Baseline assessment - (on entry)
- National testing and other summative assessments
- Boxall Profile
- Yarc
- WellComm

When a cause for concern is identified—whether related to learning, communication, social and emotional development, physical needs, or any other aspect of a child's development—the first response is high-quality, targeted classroom teaching (Quality First Teaching). The class teacher monitors the child's progress carefully and may seek initial advice from the SENCO. If concerns persist despite appropriate adjustments and support, the teacher and SENCO may agree to record these emerging needs on a **Short Note**. This process involves the child, parent and class teacher, ensuring that everyone's views are represented and that strengths, needs, current strategies and next steps are clearly recorded. A copy of the Short Note is shared with parents, and the child is added to our monitoring list.

Early support focuses on high-quality, adapted activities and in-class strategies, but may also include short-term 1:1 or small-group interventions to help boost progress and support the child in meeting their individual targets. The SENCO will be consulted for advice as required and may observe the child in class to inform next steps.

Short Notes are reviewed within a school term, according to the level of need. Following review, a collaborative decision will be made to either:

- end the Short Note if outcomes have been met and no further support is required,
- continue with a Short Note and monitor progress towards updated outcomes, or
- move to a SEN Support Plan where a more detailed approach is needed. If a child progresses to a SEN Support Plan, their name will be added to the school's SEND register, and parents will be formally notified.

If additional support beyond Quality First Teaching is required, we will work in partnership with parents and the child to create a **SEN Support Plan**. Each plan will include outcomes that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART), and will be reviewed termly. Any 1:1 or small-group interventions that form part of the provision will be recorded on the school's provision map and monitored at least termly. SEND pupil progress reviews also take place every term as part of whole-school pupil progress meetings involving the class teacher, SENCO and headteacher.

At Willington Primary School, we follow a graduated "Assess, Plan, Do, Review" approach:

- **Assess** - identifying a child's needs through discussions with parents, school-based assessments, observations, specialist assessment tools and advice from external professionals.

- **Plan** - agreeing provision and outcomes based on the child's needs and aspirations. This may include targeted interventions, adapted learning activities, specialist resources, ICT support or additional adult support.
- **Do** - implementing the planned support as outlined in the child's Support Plan.
- **Review** - evaluating the effectiveness of support termly and setting new targets where necessary.

If a review indicates that support from external agencies is required, parents will be consulted before any referral is made. Our SENCO works closely with a range of external services, including health professionals and the Local Authority SEND teams. In most cases, children are seen in school by these external specialists, whose assessments and recommendations may lead to additional or adapted strategies being implemented. Wherever possible, this support is integrated into the child's normal classroom environment to maintain consistency and reduce disruption.

If a child continues to demonstrate significant and persistent cause for concern despite sustained intervention, the school may request top-up funding or initiate an application for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) from the Local Authority. This process will be carried out in full partnership with parents and supported by a comprehensive range of written evidence gathered through the graduated response.

7. Referral for Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, or after advice from the Educational Psychologist or other professionals, a request for top-up funding or an Education and Health Care Plan will be made to the local authority. A range of written evidence about the child will support the request. Parents or school are the only partner who can request an Education, Health and Care Assessment.

If an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is issued, it will outline the child's strengths, identified needs, provision required to meet those needs, and the long-term outcomes to be worked towards. Short-term, personalised targets will be set for each child with an EHCP following consultation with parents and, where appropriate, the child. These short-term targets sit alongside the longer-term EHCP outcomes and ensure progress remains clearly monitored.

All EHCPs are reviewed at least annually. The Annual Review must take place within 12 months of the previous review and will involve input from parents, the child, school staff, and any relevant external agencies. Amendments to the plan following an Annual Review must be issued by the Local Authority within statutory timeframes. A transition review is held in Year 6 to support a smooth move to secondary school.

An EHCP will remain in place until the child is 25 years old, unless they achieve the outcomes set, move to a different Local Authority, or it is determined that the EHCP is no longer required.

8. Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

At Willington Primary School, we recognise the importance of promoting high levels of wellbeing and positive mental health for all children. We are proud to be a nurturing school and believe that emotional wellbeing is central to engagement, learning and attainment. Our aim is for every pupil to feel happy, confident, resilient, valued and emotionally secure. We understand that some children may find aspects of school life challenging, which can affect self-esteem, confidence, resilience and overall wellbeing. To support all pupils, we ensure full access to our PSHE and RSE curriculum and embed the Zones of Regulation approach across the school.

If a pupil begins to show signs of a possible SEMH difficulty, staff will seek advice from the SENCO. Any safeguarding-related concerns are logged immediately on CPOMS. When concerns persist, school identification and assessment procedures will be followed so that all partners—staff, family and the pupil—gain a clear understanding of the child's strengths, needs and the next steps for support. Additional screening tools may be used to help identify areas of difficulty, such as the Boxall Profile, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Durham's Neurodivergence and Mental Health Need-Led Planning Tool, or the *Anxious About School* guidance.

Where SEMH needs are identified as an ongoing concern, pupils may be assessed using the Boxall Profile or SDQ, and a personalised support plan will be created. This may include access to a key adult and one or more appropriate interventions. Support may include:

- 1:1 or small-group sessions with our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)
- *Talkabout* intervention (an evidence-based social communication skills intervention programme)
- Academic Nurture provision for English and/or Maths
- Targeted Zones of Regulation sessions
- Daily check-ins
- Soft starts or soft endings to the school day
- Adjusted routines or reduced timetables where appropriate

These interventions aim to help pupils develop emotional literacy, build resilience, increase self-esteem, strengthen social skills and feel safe and supported in school.

We work closely with parents and carers throughout this process to ensure support is consistent, collaborative and centred on the child's wellbeing.

9. Transition Arrangements

We recognise that transitions between classes, key stages and schools can be challenging for many children, and particularly for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We therefore take great care to ensure that all transitions are planned, supported and as smooth as possible.

At the end of each academic year, transition meetings are held between class teachers and the SENCO to ensure that there is a clear understanding of each child's needs. This supports continuity in provision and helps reduce anxiety for pupils as they move into their new class.

For pupils with SEND, an **enhanced transition package** may be provided where needed. This can include additional visits to the new classroom, opportunities to meet the new class teacher, the new teacher visiting the child in their current class, the creation of personalised social stories with photographs, 1:1 sessions to explore any worries or questions, and the identification of a trusted adult for the child to check in with. These measures help to build confidence, remove uncertainty and prepare the child for the changes ahead.

Transition to secondary school is an especially important time and is handled with great care. Our SENCO works closely with the SENCO and pastoral team from the receiving school to ensure that all partners have a thorough understanding of the pupil's strengths, needs and the support that has been effective. Key documents, reports and records are shared, and where appropriate, a transition meeting will be arranged involving both SENCOs, parents, and the pupil. Individualised transition support, such as additional visits or structured familiarisation activities, may also be put in place to help the child feel confident and secure as they move on to the next stage of their education.

10. Parent Partnership

Our school aims to place the child and their parents at the heart of the support process. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents. Parents have much to contribute to our support for children with special educational needs.

The school prospectus and our school information report on our website contains details of our policy for special educational needs, and our local offer. There is also a link to the LA Local offer page too. A named governor takes a particular interest in special needs and is always willing to talk to parents.

Signed: E. Barnett

Date: April 2026

Date to be Reviewed: April 2027