



Willow Bank Junior School

Aspiration and Achievement: Policy for supporting the special educational needs of pupils

Statutory policy

Version	Last Review	Next Review	Committee	Comments
1.0	May 2015	May 2016	FGB	Policy rewritten by S Jones in line with new guidance
1.1	June 2017	June 2019	L&T	Minor amendment in Section 8: S Jones (SENCo) now holds the National Award for SEN Co-ordination.
1.2	June 2019	June 2022	L&T	Minor amendments to Section 3 and Section 5.
1.3	May 2022	May 2025	L&T	Change of details for SENCO
1.4	May 2025	May 2028		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change of details for SENCO• Changes to details of statutory information that must be published and how to access it.• Changed “provision map” to “learning plan” to reflect new recording systems in place.

Purpose of this document

This document sets out how Willow Bank Junior School provides support to ensure that children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can access an education which is inclusive and responsive to their individual needs. It describes our graduated response to providing support which will enable all our pupils to succeed and have high aspirations.

This document describes the national requirements introduced by The Children and Families Act 2014 and how Willow Bank Junior School will meet the requirements through the funding made available to us through our budget and through other funding streams. It also sets out under what circumstances we would refer to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

This document does not replicate the legislation or the statutory guidance. Wokingham local authority has produced detailed documents, which sit alongside this policy guidance, and these are referred to within the text.

Background

The Children and Families Act 2014

This Children and Families Act sets out a new context for ensuring that children and young people who have SEND are supported to access and benefit from the range of educational opportunities that are available, so that they are enabled to have fulfilling lives as members of their community. The Act is supported by statutory guidance, 'The Code of Practice: 0 to 25' (CoP). It is this guidance to which all local authorities, all publically funded early years and education settings, including academies and free schools, and a range of national and local NHS bodies must 'have regard'.

The Children and Families Act has introduced a new statutory plan called an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan which will replace Statements of SEN. From September 2014, all new statutory assessments are under the new regulations and existing Statements will be transferred to EHC plans by summer 2017. The Act also introduces a single pre-statutory stage called 'SEN Support' and this is relevant at all age levels and educational settings.

What are schools required to do?

Schools and governing bodies have responsibilities to ensure that they plan on the basis that, at all times, some individuals and groups of children/young people will be experiencing difficulties with learning. At Willow Bank Junior School we follow the advice of the Code of Practice to ensure that we follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review' which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them. This is known as the 'graduated response'. In addition, there are specific duties on us and our governing body to:

- publish information on the school website about the implementation of the governing body's policy for pupils with SEN;
- identify pupils with SEND, ensure parents are informed and provision is made in line with SEN and Disability Code of Practice and comply with Children and Families Act 2014 legislation;
- publish the SEND policy and the SEND information report (in conjunction with parents, pupils and the Local Authority) on the school website and review regularly;
- publish information on SEND funding and provision and monitor expenditure.
- appoint a SEND governor and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) (*see SEN Regulations 2014*);
- maintain a current record of number of pupils with SEND;
- ensure SEND provision is integrated into the school improvement plan;
- monitor progress of SEND pupils and ensure provisions specified in Statements/EHC plans are in place;
- ensure **all** policies take SEND into account through the Equality Impact assessments;
- keep under constant review the arrangements for pupils present and future with a disability;
- admit all pupils who meet admissions criteria, whether or not they have SEND.

Meeting special educational needs in Willow Bank Junior School

1. What needs can the school meet?

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. The Code of Practice (2014) defines a child of compulsory school age or a young person as having a learning difficulty if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post 16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they are likely to fall within the above definitions when they reach compulsory school age, or would do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Although the needs of children and young people often cross more than one 'area of need', the COP uses four main categories of need

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

At Willow Bank Junior School we will ensure that we meet the needs of all our pupils through the provision we have available and the advice and support of other specialist professionals and practitioners and ensuring that we have the resources available.

2. How we identify pupils who are having difficulties with learning and/or special educational needs

Provision for children with social educational needs is a whole school matter. All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they: achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives and; make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training.

If pupils already have an identified special educational need, this information may be transferred from other settings. The class teacher and SENCO will use this information to:

- provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum;
- identify and provide support within the class;
- use assessment to identify any learning difficulties;
- ensure ongoing observation and assessments provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning.

For all pupils we assess on entry to the school and during the school year regularly. Where our assessment has identified that a pupil is experiencing difficulties we follow a cycle of 'assess, plan, do, review', known as the 'graduated response' and we ensure that:

- the class teacher carries out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, supported by the school's SENCO;
- the analysis includes data on progress, attainment and approaches to learning and the views of the pupil and their parent/carers and advice from any other support staff;
- where behaviour is an area of concern we use a behaviour support plan which draws on an analysis of Antecedents, Behaviour and Consequences;
- we plan provision which can remove the barriers to learning for the pupil using evidence based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions;
- we provide support which may include differentiation, additional programmes, small group and/or individual support;
- the class teacher retains the responsibility for the learning of the pupil even if the pupil is receiving support away from the rest of the class, for example, in a small group;
- we review the pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to be made in consultation with the pupil and their parent/carer;

- where progress is limited we take advice from external specialists /practitioners and discuss their input, advice and support with parents and all staff involved;
- where assessment indicates that specialist services are required, we make referrals promptly;
- we draw up a Learning Plan.

The SENCO at Willow Bank Junior is Tracy Clarke

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3. Involving parents in their child's education

Helping children with special needs is a partnership and we recognise the important role parents have in this partnership. We positively encourage parents to contact us and discuss any difficulties as soon as possible, the first point of call being the class teacher. Evidence shows that children make most progress when their key adults work together on an informal or formal basis. At Willow Bank Junior School we demonstrate this by:

- acknowledging and drawing on parental knowledge and expertise in relation to their child;
- focusing on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need and development;
- being aware of the emotional and personal investment of parents;
- ensure that parents are involved in the monitoring and review of their child's educational needs;
- respect the validity of differing perspectives and seek constructive ways of reconciling different viewpoints;
- being honest, open and transparent about what we can deliver;
- respect the different needs parents themselves may have, such as physical, personal, communication and/or cultural;
- always discussing any concerns we have with the pupil's parents at the earliest point;
- recognise the need for flexibility in the timing and structure of meetings.

4. Pupil Voice.

The Children and Families Act is clear that:

- all children and young people need to be supported to develop aspirations for their future lives as active members of their community;
- all children and young people have the right to have their voice heard;

- involving children and young people in discussions about their learning, progress and how provision is made.

At Willow Bank School we consult all pupils through our School Council, in addition where pupils have special educational needs we ensure that:

- all pupils are encouraged and supported to make their views known by, written comments, talking to a preferred adult, friend or mentor, drawing etc;
- any interventions or strategies will be explained and discussed with pupils;
- all pupils will be encouraged to monitor and judge their own progress in a positive and supportive environment;
- reviews of progress are 'person centred' i.e. they will have the pupil, their aspirations and needs at the centre of the review;
- reviews are always outcome focussed, reflecting what is important to, and for, the pupil.

5. How we assess and review progress

Every child's progress is monitored closely, to ensure appropriate progress is made. Teachers monitor all children throughout the year, meet parents and carers at parents evenings, progress meetings and in consultation with external agencies. If there are concerns about a child's progress, as a result of monitoring then we will arrange to meet with parents/carers. Progress and notes are noted in Learning Plans which teachers and Teaching Assistants access when needed.

Monitoring the progress of children is ongoing and reviewed regularly at least termly, depending on the individual circumstances. The class teacher works with the SENCO to highlight support and interventions on the pupils' Learning Plan. Where appropriate, changes to the provision for children can be made in between review meetings if circumstances change.

6. Preparing for transition

Transition is ever present in our planning for pupils as we are constantly aware of the skills pupils will need in order to access the next part of their learning. When that learning is to take place in a new setting or phase, transition planning for this is a key task.

All class teachers meet to discuss the transition of all the children in their class before they move up through the school, and any specific individual needs are made clear for a smooth transition.

We have comprehensive transition arrangements for children moving on to our partner secondary schools. These take place in the summer term prior to the children starting at secondary school in the September, and are part of the borough-wide programme. Transition for children with SEND is a part of this process.

Information provided to a new school will include records of interventions, assessments and any standardised tests carried out.

7. The approach to teaching children and young people with SEN and how adaptations are made to the curriculum and learning environment

To support children and their families the Children and Families Act requires all local authorities to set out a Local Offer which is a description of support and services available to children and young people who have SEND, and their families, how services can be accessed and any criteria for accessing them. Wokingham's Local Offer can be accessed on <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/children-families-and-young-people/send-local-offer>

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 the governing body or proprietor of maintained schools, maintained nursery schools and academy schools must publish information on their websites about the implementation of the setting's policy for pupils with SEN. This information report should be updated annually, with any changes to the information that occurs through the year being updated as soon as possible.

The information that is required is set out in the Special Education Needs and Disability Regulations 2015 and is covered in Chapter 6 (para ref 6.79) of the Special Education Needs Code of Practice 2015. Willow Bank Junior School's Information Report can be found on our school website under "Key Information – SEN" <https://www.willowbankjunior.com/sen/>

Wokingham Local Authority has set out what it expects should be available in all mainstream settings to meet the needs of children and young people without recourse to a statutory EHC needs assessment. This document, 'Wokingham Borough Council Ordinarily Available Provision - A Graduated Response - SEND Support - Settings and Schools can be found here:

<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Ordinarily%20Available%20Provision%20a%20graduated%20response%20SEND%20Support%20Settings%20and%20School.pdf>.

8. The expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist support will be secured

The SENCO will attend training offered by the Local Authority and other institutions to ensure they are up to date with current practice and legislation. Staff meetings periodically focus on SEND issues, and all staff are encouraged to view the provision for children with SEND to be a collective responsibility. Where specific issues arise, the appropriate members of staff will be offered training relating to these.

Through our school cluster group identify training needs and plan training in a cost effective way as well as using our cluster meetings as a professional forum to share expertise across schools. The SENCO and Head Teacher attend termly planning meetings with partner agencies in the authority and we have access to bespoke training from Wokingham's Educational Psychology Service.

All staff have a wealth of experience of working with children with SEND and also working with families. We currently have teaching assistants trained in delivering nurture groups, social skills groups, occupational therapy exercises, and in personal care.

The SENCO is a qualified teacher working at the school and holds The National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination, as required by legislation.

9. Evaluating the effectiveness of our provision

Where individual or different interventions are used these will be evidence based and our progress tracking allows us to verify that the interventions are effective. Sometimes individual pupils respond to different interventions and approaches. Where we try a different approach or intervention we will measure its efficiency by measuring the outcomes achieved by the pupil and take into account the cost of the intervention.

10. Inclusive practice

We ensure that all our pupils, are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities.

11. The social and emotional development of our pupils

We are a fully inclusive school community and the emotional and social development of all our pupils is a priority. Groups are run by Nurture Assistants, Teaching Assistants and external agencies where a need arises, for example social groups, nurture groups, emotional literacy groups, social stories and 1:1 time. Children are encouraged to attend meetings such as Annual Reviews and discuss the provision made.

12. Working with other professionals and practitioners

At Willow Bank we are committed to working with other professionals and practitioners to ensure that we maximise the impact of our interventions whilst minimising duplication and disruption for pupils, families and practitioners. In order to do this we

- listen to parents to ensure we know which services they use and are valued by them;
- ensure that we contact all practitioners working with our pupils to invite them to relevant meetings and reviews;
- use person centred approaches with all our pupils who have SEN to ensure that interventions are coordinated and so add extra value;
- value the contribution of all;
- engage with local authority services in a timely and professional way.

Arrangements for handling complaints about SEN provision

We know that all parents want the best for their child and we will always seek to resolve any concerns quickly. Where parents have a concern about the provision being made initially they should contact the class teacher.