

SEND Policy

(Special Educational Needs and Disability)

March 2020



LOWER SCHOOL

Where Learning Starts

Reviewed	March 2020
Adopted	February 2015
Policy Status	Statutory
Review Period	Annually
Person Responsible	Head Teacher

Description of School

Westoning Lower School is a one-form entry lower school in the village of Westoning in Central Bedfordshire. The school caters for children between the ages of 2 and 9. Westoning Lower School has children from a wide social background and a broad range of ability including children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The School follows the National Guidance on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) outlined in the Code of Practice 2014 and the Local Authority Graduated Response for Early Years 0-5 and the Local Authority Graduated Response for 5-16.

Our Vision

Every teacher is a teacher of every child, including those with SEND. This statement underpins our school vision, which is to provide the best expertise and support for all members of our community. We aim to close the progress gap and ensure full inclusion in the life of the school for all children. Our curriculum is broad and balanced and we aim for all to have access to this. We do this through:

- having high expectations and aspirations for what children can achieve;
- working closely with families and children with SEND to achieve those aspirations;
- identifying needs early and planning and implementing a graduated system of support;
- liaising with our colleagues from outside agencies to provide a cohesive plan, focusing on long-term outcomes;
- making decisions with families and giving parents and carers choice with regard to our SEND provision; and
- ensuring that excellent outcomes are achieved through the knowledge, skills and attitude of everyone working here at Westoning Lower School with our children.

At Westoning Lower School we operate a “whole pupil, whole school” approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs. Through good and effective teaching and targeted support, we aim always to ensure access to the curriculum for all pupils. We work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014 and provide support and advice for all staff working with special educational needs pupils. Developing and maintaining a partnership and high levels of engagement with parents is a priority.

SEND Policy

This policy has evolved to take into account changes in the recent SEND Code of Practice and it reflects current thinking and theory related to SEND. Our stakeholders have been involved in its development. It is a working document and is reviewed and amended (if necessary) on an annual basis. In addition, the SEND policy can be found on our school website.

The provision and procedures for pupils with Medical conditions are covered in a separate policy (see policy). Jacqui Boyle, SENDCO, is the senior leader responsible for this aspect of SEND.

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

At Westoning Lower School we follow the Code of Practice’s definition of SEND which is:

“A child and young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made.”

Children are considered to have SEND when their learning needs require support above and beyond that normally provided in classrooms in terms of Wave 1 Quality Teaching.

Types of SEND

At Westoning Lower School, provision is made for children who experience a range of difficulties. SEND falls into five categories and these are described below and are in line with those detailed in the Code of Practice 2014. It is the case sometimes that pupils may well have more than one special educational need.

Communication and interaction: e.g. speech, language and communication needs (SLCN), Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Asperger’s Syndrome;

Cognition and learning: e.g. specific learning difficulties (SpLD), moderate learning difficulties (MLD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, severe learning difficulties (SLD);

Social, mental and emotional health: e.g. attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), depression, eating disorder, attachment disorder, self-injury;

Sensory and/ or physical needs: e.g. vision impairment (VI), deafness or hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI), cerebral palsy etc.

Medical needs: our policy on medical conditions details our provision for children who have a medical condition. Where a child has a medical condition AND a special educational need this provision is well-coordinated. In these cases, the child may have an individual health care plan.

Arrangements for Admission for Children with SEND

We are a fully-inclusive school and make every possible and realistic effort to ensure that a child who wishes to come to our school is welcomed and provided for.

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits schools from discriminating against disabled children and young people in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. Our building is on one level with the oldest part being built in the early 1900s and the newest in 2008. However we have in the past, and will do in the future if required, worked with children and their families to make modifications where possible to meet needs. (See Accessibility Plan.)

Identification, Assessment and Intervention

Philosophy

We believe that all pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. At Westoning Lower School our teachers use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty are identified and addressed using a range of assessment tools and interventions. We know the benefits of early identification where needs are identified at the earliest point; we then make effective provision improving the long-term outcomes for the child.

In practice

Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline;
- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress;
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers;
- widens the attainment gap.

In addition, assessments are carried out from time to time in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life.

Structure of our staggered support

Throughout our system of graduated SEND response, we will inform and communicate with parents. It is our wish to work in tandem with families as we believe this is in the best interest of the child. Recent research into regular, un-rushed parent-teacher consultations prove that effective meetings and shared goals provide the best outcomes.

Here are the steps of our SEND provision:

- Our **first** response to a slow rate of progress is **high quality teaching** targeted at areas of weakness.
- Where progress continues to be less than expected, the class teacher, working with the SENDCo, would assess whether the child has SEND or is in need of a catch-up intervention. The **second** phase of support is putting in place a **rigorous intervention**, targeted at the need, designed to secure better progress, where required. These interventions are generally led by our highly experienced Teaching Assistants. Examples of these interventions are phonics, spelling, maths boosting.

- If progress continues to be slow and of concern, the SENDCo will identify the child as having SEND. In this instance, our SENDCo will work with the children for a period of time. This is the **third** phase in our response to providing for children with SEND. Parents will be consulted and they will be made aware of any concerns that school has through parent-teacher meetings and annual reports. Examples of interventions are:

Communication and interaction – *speaking and listening groups*

Cognition and learning - *structured one-to-one / small group interventions for learners who find reading difficult and writing difficult. It is targeted to the needs of individual learners.*

Social, mental and emotional health – *pastoral care and mentoring*

Sensory and/or physical needs – *adjustments to the environment and specific equipment provided*

For a more comprehensive list of interventions provided to support children with a range of SEND, please see the SENDCo.

At this point, the children will be included on our school SEND register at Stage 1 as outlined in the LA Graduated Response and an Individual Pupil Passport will be written. This is primarily for us to track progress and intervention and is necessary for central funding to be delegated. However, the register is a private document and cannot be viewed by anyone but school staff. We will always inform and consult with parents. By this stage, the child will have been through the previous steps of provision and the parents will be aware that school has concerns.

- Over a period of time, the SENDCo will identify whether the child needs to be referred to one of the outside agencies (for example, educational psychology, child paediatricians, occupational therapy, speech therapy). If outside agency expertise is sought, this is our **fourth** phase in our response. At this point, parents will be asked to collaborate with school staff and fill in a SEND Support Plan which asks for opinions from both home and school, and the child will be placed on Stage 2 as outlined in the LA Graduated Response and an Individual Pupil Passport will be written. Outside agencies meet with families and keep them in the loop throughout their intervention. They may work directly with children or may operate a more advisory role where they attend meetings with parents and SEND staff and set targets. They will help school deliver personalised programmes. In addition, each service offers training to schools. We use a needs analysis amongst our teaching staff and teaching assistants which then prompts tailored training and professional development.
- If a child has needs which necessitate more intervention and more resources, school will initiate a referral for an Educational Health Care Plan. This is the **fifth** phase. This has taken the place of a Statement of Educational Needs. Parents are very involved with the referral and evidence-gathering and their views and opinions are taken firmly into account. The EHC Plan becomes a working, appropriate and up-to-date document which centres on the child and states outcomes that all involved want to see the child achieve.
- As a school, we believe it is our responsibility to develop the whole child, caring and addressing all of their needs, not just educational needs. The new Code of Practice no longer states “behaviour” as a description of a SEND. Instead, school will work hard to focus on underlying causes through knowing the children well. An example of these might be difficulties with speech and language. It is the role of the teacher, together with the Senior Leadership Team, to oversee the school population and to liaise with the SENDCo to identify children who are falling behind using the school’s tracking system. Conversations will occur with class teachers and with the SENDCo and all colleagues will meet and discuss children who are in need of more support.

Clearly we expect that many children identified as requiring SEND support will make good progress which will be celebrated. They will come off the SEND register at this point, with teachers keeping a watchful eye to ensure that the child stays on track. Further intervention can be provided if deemed necessary.

There are children who fall into the categories listed below who are not considered to have a SEND:

- short term lapse in progress and learning
- attendance and punctuality

- health and welfare
- housing difficulties
- English as an additional language
- being in receipt of the pupil premium
- being a looked after child

Confidentiality, funding and record keeping

As explained in the previous section, we have a graduated approach to SEND support at our school. Progress of all children in our school is tracked and we can see easily what progress has been made over time. The data originates from class teachers' assessments and formal testing and is measured against average expected attainment for each year group. When support is put in place, be it at phase two and a short-term intervention, the children will have targets set and they will be assessed at the beginning of the intervention and at the end and the outcome will be measured. All records such as these will be kept with the SENDCo. This information is confidential, never taken out of the building and only looked at by the SENDCo and those who are working with the children. Throughout a child's journey through this school, records will be made and kept and we are always extremely aware of confidentiality as is the whole of Westoning Lower School's Staff.

We foster excellent relationships with outside agencies and many planning meetings, 'team around the child' meetings and training sessions are held in conjunction with our colleagues. Their role is essential to the progress and well-being of our community as is their support and expertise. We refer children to outside agencies using the agency's referral form or a common assessment form (CAF) which is an online form which can be accessed (with permission) by other professionals. It is intended to provide an integrated support network where education, health, social services etc. can link up easily.

From September 2014, all local authorities have been required to draw up an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan** instead of a statement of SEND. An EHC plan brings the educational, health and social care needs of a child into a single legal document. The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision that meets the needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care, and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

There are some significant changes to the process of assessment, planning and delivery of EHC plans. The main change is that it produces a plan which is more outcomes focused and family centred. The EHC plan will detail the provision to meet the child/young person's educational, health and care needs and include what offer of a personal budget is available (if any).

In our school budget, we now have delegated funding from Central Bedfordshire Local Authority and we have the money to respond to all but the most complex special educational need. There may be a cross-over in funding for those children who have SEND funding allocated as well as pupil premium funding (the sum of money allocated to all children eligible for free school meals).

Evaluating our effectiveness

We regularly evaluate our practice and provision of SEND support through:

- teacher observations,
- formal and information meetings between teachers and SLT,
- scrutinising data and levels of progress made,
- work scrutinies,
- appraisal of TAs,
- regular support and monitoring at subject level by our middle leaders,
- in-depth discussion and planning at senior leadership level,
- learning walks.

We have a designated SEND governor, Elaine O'Shaughnessy, who meets with the SENDCo, Jacqui Boyle, keeping up-to-date with the provision within the school. The SENDCo also provides a review of SEND to the Full Governing Body on a termly basis in Head Teacher reports.

Rates of progress are tracked using our rigorous assessment tool. The SENDCo is aware of the children's starting points and their expected levels and rates of progress. Optimum progress is at the heart of all

SEND provision. Teaching Assistants run lots of interventions and these have an entry assessment and an exit assessment; this allows the interventions to be measurable and their effect evaluated.

Assessing and Reviewing Progress

Termly pupil progress reviews are held with class teachers and the head teacher. At these reviews teachers report on the expected progress of all children in their class. When progress is deemed to be slower than expected, decisions are made at these meetings as to which intervention might be appropriate. We assess, plan, deliver and review on a termly basis. Parents of children with EHC Plans are offered termly structured conversations with the child's class teacher, and SENDCo if appropriate. Other professionals involved may also attend these meetings. In addition, these children have a home-school book where parents can feel more in the loop and are able to keep up with what is happening in school.

Teaching children with SEND

The teachers at Westoning Lower School are committed, effective and competent and adhere to the teaching standards at all times. Standard 5 expects that teachers ...

"... have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them."

Therefore, we use our expertise and experience to adapt our pedagogy according to the needs of our children. Children are grouped according to mixed ability following KAGAN approaches, sometimes paired with a partner who will support them, supported by a TA in class, they may work with the class teacher in a small group or with the SENDCo in class or in another room, or work with a teacher or TA individually in a 1:1 session. We adapt our methods to suit the needs of the child. Lessons are differentiated and, where appropriate, technological aids such as tablets or laptops are used.

Teaching assistants support learning and progress and, in consultation with class teachers, help deliver the curriculum in a scaffolded way to those who learn best by taking small steps. Training in all areas of SEND is organised for the TAs from a range of sources such as occupational therapy and speech and language therapy. In appraisal meetings training needs are discussed and the SLT attempt to ensure the training is put in place.

Children on our SEND list have individual pupil passports which are drawn up in consultation with the class teacher and SENDCo. These contain outcomes which are achievable and challenging at the same time.

If children are thought to be falling behind their peers, they are placed on an appropriate intervention programme. These have clear outcomes. If progress continues to be slow, they will have input from the SENDCo who may decide to refer them to an outside agency. Our graduated system of provision is explained previously in this document. We aim to include parents in all planning and decision-making. We believe that meeting the special educational needs of children depends on a partnership with parents between school and home and we value the contribution and involvement of parents to this end. We provide a consistent approach to meeting the needs of SEND children, within the constraints of the school's budget. We appreciate the support of parents of children with SEND recognising that it is only through a positive home/school partnership that children with SEND will make the most effective and rapid progress.

Adapting the curriculum and learning environment

We aim to be fully inclusive and have made changes to our classrooms to ensure that the needs of our children are provided for. This includes thinking about where furniture is placed in our classes where we have children with physical needs. Arrangements are made for those children with SEND to best access assessments. We are flexible in our approach, aiming at all times to give the child the chance to shine.

Engaging in activities

Our children with SEND are able to access all activities including physical education activities, lunchtime and before and after school clubs. Where necessary, learning support assistants who support children will accompany them to activities and they are then able to make sure that the child can join in. It is always our wish that all of our children have equal access and that extra-curricular activities are adapted accordingly. We build our children's confidence by giving them responsibilities and roles. We aim always to remove any barriers to participation.

Provision for emotional, mental and social development

We recognise that this area of development is key to happiness and optimum learning. Therefore, we place importance on children's emotional well-being through having our PSHE curriculum firmly embedded throughout our curriculum and our assemblies reflect good citizenship and our values approach. We have a school buddying system where the Year 4 children act as 'WLS Friends' for the younger children and encourage the latter to make friends, sustain participation in games and also problem-solve. The WLS friends work in the playgrounds and take this responsibility very seriously. Our teachers provide 1:1 emotional support where necessary. We celebrate anti-bullying week and e-safety is taught across the year groups in computing lessons and we participate in Safer Internet Day.

Expertise and training of staff

The SENDCo disseminates information and guidance to class teachers which helps develop everyone's practice in relation to SEND. On a regular basis, outside agencies will provide training - such as the whole staff being trained in ASD and ADHD. Individual TAs keep up-to-date with the needs of their child (for e.g. autistic spectrum disorder, Down's syndrome). Teaching assistants are trained fully to deliver specific, widely respected interventions.

The SENDCo or Early Years Leader will visit a child in their nursery or pre-school setting if they are joining our Early Years and have SEND. This is always a very useful experience and allays parental concerns at the same time as being an information-gathering exercise for school. As a consequence, we are then able to put in place the correct amount of support so that the child has the best possible start.

The SENDCo is the Head Teacher, Jacqui Boyle, and she has 19 years' experience as a SENDCo.

Equipment and facilities

Our school is over a hundred years old and is situated over one level so we are entirely accessible. We make arrangements to be as inclusive as possible and are able to offer places to the children that apply to Westoning Lower School. When specialist equipment is required, we are advised by the relevant specialised team what to purchase or the equipment is loaned to us for a period of time. We buy particular items on the advice of the occupational therapy team and we act on their suggestions. We have a disabled toilet.

Consulting our children and their parents

We aim to fully involve the children and their parents at all stages of the process, asking for their views and feelings at the planning and review stages and discussing with them progress and next steps. They are involved in setting outcomes. For the children with EHC Plans, we have home-school books which pass between school and home keeping both parts of the child's life linked. This is an opportunity for parents to see what their child is learning and what they can do to help their child at home. We offer termly meetings to parents but operate an 'open-door' policy where teachers are very happy to meet with parents in an informal capacity. These meetings will need to be organised in advance, of course, but our aim is always to be communicative and working together towards the same goal.

The school's aim and commitment is to raise the achievement of every child at the school. Apart from the regular meetings already mentioned, parents are more than welcome to discuss their concerns with their child's class teacher and we actively encourage them to do so. A parent knows their child best and will be able to give staff valuable insight into any difficulties that they may be experiencing at school. Staff will always make every effort to contact and involve parents should they themselves have a concern about a child. We will use the expertise we have in the school to communicate with parents who do not speak or write English, but if such expertise is not available we use translation services to support such communication.

Complaints procedure

If any parent has a concern about their child's progress at school they should first discuss this with the class teacher and agree a course of action that will be reviewed at regular intervals. If they are unhappy with the action that the class teacher is taking they should ask to meet with the SENDCo / Head teacher to explain their concerns further. If the parent is still unhappy with the response that they get, they should contact the SEND link governor, who will investigate their concerns and respond. If the parent continues to feel that the school has not addressed their concerns adequately they should write to the LA Special Needs Department, outlining their concerns and ask for the matter to be investigated. The LA is the final arbiter should such a situation arise but we hope to address any concerns at a very early stage.

Support for Parents

There are a range of services and organisations that provide support for pupils and families in the school and they offer advice which can make all the difference to children's progress and well-being. For more information on these, please see Central Bedfordshire's local offer on:

https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/15/sen_and_disability_-_local_offer

Induction, transfer and transition

On arrival at Westoning Lower School, the children and families are met by the office staff and accompanied to their classroom where they will meet their teacher (if they have not already done so). The class teachers are alerted beforehand that they have a new child and have therefore prepared books etc. for the child. New families are given letters, procedures and copies of any relevant information at this stage. We seek as much information as possible from the transferring school when children come to Westoning Lower School. We ensure that all information about children with special educational needs is sent to the receiving school when children transfer schools.

When children are transferring to middle schools, the SENDCo and Year 4 teacher meet with the middle school transition teachers to ensure that the children have a smooth move into the next stage of their education. Communication channels between HAST schools are good.

Any child who has an Education Health Care Plan will have a review in their final year at Westoning Lower School and the EHC Plan will be amended to take account of the different circumstances at their middle school. At this review, parents complete a form where they make their choices of middle schools clear. The child's EHC Plan is then re-written to name the middle school.

The Role of the Governing Body

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 responsible person in this school is Elaine O'Shaughnessy. The SENDCo meets with the SEND Link Governor to keep her abreast of SEND throughout our school. The Head Teacher informs the Governing Body of how the funding allocated to support special educational needs has been used.

Local Offer

Westoning Lower School has a local offer which is in line with the LA's Local Offer. This can be found on our website in the SEND Information Report.

Educational inclusion

At Westoning Lower School we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all and believe that we will achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated, to enable levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Monitoring and Review

The monitoring of this policy and the procedures specified within it is the responsibility of the SENDCo. The policy will be reviewed annually or when new legislation or advice becomes available.