

# Thomas Willingale School



*Thomas Willingale School supports endeavour, celebrates excellence and pursues equality for all.*

## **Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy**

Annual Review: Spring 2026  
Next Review date: Spring 2027

## Policy on Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Children come to school with a variety of needs. Each child has a right to have those needs recognised and met. By recognising those needs and differentiating our resources and practice we aim to give all children access to our curriculum.

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has 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.

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years; (January 2015)

### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 At Thomas Willingale School we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our children whatever their needs or abilities. Not all children with disabilities have special educational needs and not all pupils with SEN meet the definition of disability but this policy covers all these children.
- 1.2 This school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. The National Curriculum is our starting point for planning that meets the specific needs of individuals and groups of children. When planning, teachers set suitable learning challenges and respond to children's diverse learning needs. Some children have barriers to learning that mean they have special needs and require particular action by the school.
- 1.3 These requirements are likely to arise as a consequence of a child having special educational needs. Teachers take account of these requirements and make provision, where necessary, to support individuals or groups of children and thus enable them to participate effectively in curriculum and assessment activities. Such children may need additional help or different help from that given to other children of the same age.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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, 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.
- 1.6 The school is committed to early identification of SEND and adopts a graduated response to meeting special educational needs in line with the current, 2014 Code of Practice. A range of evidence is collected through the usual assessment and monitoring arrangements and observation; if this suggests that a child is not making the expected progress, the class teacher will consult with one of our SENCos. We have three SENCos at Thomas Willingale. Mrs Burgess (Inclusion Manager and SENCo), Mrs Radmore (SENCo for EYFS and Key Stage One) and Miss Symes (SENCo for Year 5). The class teacher will consult with the SENCo in order to decide whether additional and/or different provision is necessary. Appendix One demonstrates our graduated response to SEND.

## **2 Aims and objectives**

2.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs/disabilities of each child;
- to ensure that the special educational needs/disabilities of children are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's SEND;
- to enable all children to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum;
- to ensure that parents/carers are able to play their part in supporting their child's education;
- to ensure that our children have a voice in this process.

## **3 Educational inclusion**

3.1 In our school, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and social, emotional and well-being needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

3.2 Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- providing Quality First Teaching;
- providing additional and/or different support when required with reference to the Essex Provision Guidance Tool.
- providing support for children who need help with communication, language, literacy and maths;
- planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all their senses and of varied experiences;
- planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities;
- helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning effectively and safely;
- helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma or stress, and to take part in learning.

## **4 Special Educational Needs & Disabilities**

4.1 Children with special educational needs have learning difficulties that call for special provision to be made. All children may have special needs at some time in their lives. Children have a learning difficulty if he/she:

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

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years; (January 2015)

4.2 Many of the children who join us have already been in early education. In many cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children.

4.3 If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, we use a range of strategies that make full use of all available classroom and school resources. We take a graduated response to SEND (see appendix one). Support will start as Class Support then progress on to School SEND Support, if necessary. The child's class teacher will offer interventions that are different from or additional to those provided as part of the school's usual working practices. The class teacher will keep parents or carers informed and draw upon them for additional information. Our SENCos, if not already involved, will become involved if the teacher and parents/carers feel that the child would benefit from further support. Our SENCos will then take the lead in further assessments of the child's needs.

4.4 We will record, in a Provision Plan/One-Plan, the strategies and objectives used to support the child. The Plan will show the short-term objectives set for the child and the teaching strategies to be used. The Plan will be formally reviewed at least 3 times per year. Our plans are always child-centred and where possible, we like to involve the wishes and aspirations of the pupil.

4.5 If the Provision Plan/One Plan or One-Page Profile review identifies that support is needed from outside services, we will consult parents/carers prior to any support being actioned. In most cases, children will be seen in school by external support services. This may lead to additional strategies or strategies. External support services will provide information for the child's new or updated Provision Plan. The new strategies in the Provision Plan will, wherever possible, be implemented within the child's normal classroom setting.

4.6 If the child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, a request for assessment for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan will be made to the Local Authority (LA). A range of written evidence about the child will support the request.

4.7 In our school, the Inclusion Manager and SENCos (with regard to SEND):

- Are qualified teachers and are fully accredited SENCos;
- ensures that all records for children with SEND are kept up to date;
- manages the day-to-day operation of the policy;
- advises on the graduated approach to providing SEND support;
- co-ordinates the provision for and manages the responses to children's special needs and disabilities;
- supports and advises colleagues;
- oversees the records of all children with special educational needs and disabilities;
- acts as the link with parents and carers;
- acts as the link with external agencies and other support agencies;
- monitors and evaluates the SEND provision, and reports to the governing body;
- works with the Headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- manages a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provision to be made for children with special educational needs (e.g. advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget);
- contributes to the professional development of all staff;
- Is also the Designated Teacher for any looked after pupils.
- Is aware of the requirements of the SEN Code of Practice; January 2015 and ensures that these requirements are met.

4.8 In our school the class teachers have a responsibility towards the children with SEND in their class and will work closely with the SENCos. Our class teachers have responsibility for (with regard to SEND):

- planning and delivering an adapted curriculum and collecting and gathering information;
- providing Quality First Teaching;
- liaising with parents and carers as well as external agencies, learning support assistants (LSAs), other support staff and colleagues where necessary;
- monitoring and evaluating Provision Plans;
- evaluating progress of SEND children in their class;
- attending INSET and training sessions.

## **5 The role of the governing body**

5.1 The governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all children with special educational needs.

5.2 The governing body does its best to secure the necessary provision for any child identified as having special educational needs/disabilities. The governors, in supporting the Headteacher, the Inclusion Manager and SENCos, ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for these children. The governing body, in supporting the Headteacher and the Inclusion Manager, ensures that parents or carers are notified of any decision by the school that SEND provision is to be made for their child.

5.3 The governing body has identified a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for children with SEND. The designated governor is Emma Stratford. The 'responsible person' in this school is the Inclusion Manager or SENCos. The Inclusion Manager or SENCos ensure that all those who teach a child with an EHCP are aware of the nature of the EHCP.

5.4 The SEND governor ensures that all governors are aware of the school's SEND provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

## **6 Allocation of resources**

6.1 Our Inclusion Manager or SENCos are responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for SEND provision within the school, including the provision for children with EHCPs.

6.2 The Headteacher or Inclusion Manager informs the governing body of how the funding allocated to support SEND has been employed.

6.3 The Headteacher and the Inclusion Manager meet regularly, at least annually, to agree on how to use funds directly related to EHCPs.

## **7 Assessment**

7.1 Prior to admission parents and carers and children are offered the opportunity to visit the school. They are encouraged to voice any concerns they might have about their child's introduction to school or about their child's learning, needs or disabilities. In addition, all new pupils are offered a home visit so parents have another opportunity to highlight any concerns or prior diagnoses or SEND interventions.

7.2 Nursery and Reception children are assessed continuously and SEND identified.

7.3 Early identification is vital. The class teacher informs the parents/carers at the earliest opportunity to alert them to concerns and enlist their active help and participation.

- 7.4 The class teachers and the SENCos assess and monitor the children's progress in line with existing school practices. This is an on-going process. **Assess, Plan, Do, Review.**
- 7.5 The SENCos work closely with parents/carers and teachers to plan an appropriate programme of support.
- 7.6 The assessment of children reflects as far as possible their participation in the whole curriculum of the school. The class teacher and the SENCos can break down the assessment into smaller steps in order to aid progress and provide detailed and accurate indicators.
- 7.7 The LA seeks a range of advice before making a formal statement. The needs of the child are considered to be paramount in this.
- 7.8 The assessment and early identification of children with SEND is in line with the guidance from the Local Authority (Essex).

## **8 Access to the curriculum**

- 8.1 All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated 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.
- 8.2 Teachers use a range of strategies to meet children's SEND. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we adapt work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.
- 8.3 Provision Plans/One Plans employ a small-steps approach. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and outcomes, we ensure that children experience success. All children who receive School SEND Support have a Provision Plan and/or One-Page Profile. All desired outcomes are SMART outcomes:-
  - Small,
  - Measurable,
  - Achievable,
  - Realistic,
  - Time specific.
- 8.4 Provision Plans/One Plans are reviewed termly by means of a consultation between the class teacher, Inclusion Manager, LSA and any involved agencies and parents and carers. Children, where appropriate, are also invited to attend. Desired outcomes are reviewed and extended or updated as necessary. Informal monitoring of targets is ongoing throughout the year.
- 8.5 We support children in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. Where possible, we do not withdraw children from the classroom. However, there are times, when to maximise learning, to implement an intervention programme etc., we ask the children to work in small groups, or in a one-to-one situation inside or outside the classroom.

## **9 Partnership with parents and carers**

- 9.1 The school works closely with parents and carers in the support of those children with SEND. We encourage an active partnership through an ongoing dialogue with parents and carers. The home-school agreement is central to this. Parents and carers have much to contribute to our support for children with SEND.
- 9.2 The website contains details of our policy for SEND and the arrangements made for children in our school. This includes details about our school's Local Offer and our graduated response to SEND. A named governor takes a particular interest in SEND and is always willing to talk to parents and carers.
- 9.3 We have regular meetings, each term, to share the progress of children with their parents and carers. We inform the parents and carers of any outside intervention and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of children with SEND.

## **10 Pupil participation**

- 10.1 In our school, we encourage children to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to children of all ages. The work in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS – Nursery and Reception) recognises the importance of children developing social as well as educational skills.
- 10.2 Children are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets in their Provision Plan and in their review meetings. Children are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

## **11 Monitoring and review**

- 11.1 The Inclusion Manager and SENCos monitor the development of children within the SEND system in school. The Inclusion Manager provides staff with regular summaries of the impact of the policy on the practice of the school. Governors are updated through the Headteacher's Report or by the Inclusion Manager.
- 11.2 The SENCos involved in supporting teachers involved in writing Provision Plans/One Plans for children. The SENCos and the Headteacher hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in this area. The SENCos meets regularly with the named governor with responsibility for special needs.
- 11.3 The governing body reviews this policy annually and considers any amendments in the light of the annual review findings.

**Signed:....R Jenkins.....**

Chair of Governors

**Date: .....7/1/26.....**