



Mill Water School

Preparation for *their* best future

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

February 2026

1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Make sure our school fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our school will:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with SEND
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and values

Mill Water's vision is for each learner to receive an individualised, holistic education, within a caring and nurturing environment, that prepares them for "*their* best future". Our four core values underpin all that we do: communicate thoughtfully; celebrate achievements; respect one another; and behave kindly.

3. Legislation and guidance

This is based on the statutory guidance [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#), [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) and [working together to improve school attendance](#).

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The governance guide for [academy trusts](#) which sets out trustees' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

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

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our school we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

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 schools.

5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into four broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than one area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.

AREA OF NEED	
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder • Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Senior Leadership Team

The school's provision will be coordinated by the Headteacher and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The SLT provides professional guidance to all colleagues and works closely with staff, parents and carers and professionals providing a support role to the family to ensure that our learners receive appropriate support and high quality teaching. The key responsibilities of the SLT are:

- Inform and liaise with parents and carers about a pupil's needs and the provision made
- Work with the Local Governing Body to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy

- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils in line with their EHC Plans
- Advise on the differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils up to date and accurate
- Monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding any aspect of SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- Ensure there is a commitment to training/CPD and the sharing of information and expertise
- Ensure the professional development of all staff involved in meeting the needs of our learners is ongoing and continuous. A wide range of training opportunities are provided.
- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- Work with teaching staff to use data to reflect on and improve the quality of teaching
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the school register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an amendment to the EHCP or when an EHC plan needs an early review

6.2 Local Governing Body (LGB) / Board of Trustees

The Governing Body / Board of Trustees will:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil gets the support they need
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Make sure that the school provides access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Make sure that the school provides an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report

- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans

6.3 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SLT to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree aspirations for the pupil

6.4 Parents or Carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development. Parents or carers of a pupil will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to regular meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress
- The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil

6.5 The Pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are in appropriate ways
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

- The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible

7. Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about their provision. We will take into account any concerns that parents have. All parties will understand the agreed outcomes sought for the child, and will be clear on what the next steps are.

8. SEN information report

The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

9. Levels of support

9.1 School-based SEN provision

Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's budget. The SLT will liaise with the LA to monitor and discuss funding.

9.2 Education, health and care (EHC) plan

All pupils who attend Mill Water School have an EHCP. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

9.3 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress
- Monitoring by the class teacher, SLT, LGB and Special Partnership Trust
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents/carers

10. Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil. However, they may need additional support.

Our approach to supporting pupils who are absent from school due to their SEND is set out in our attendance policy.

11. Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers, and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group.

For more details see our safeguarding/child protection policy.

12. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The Headteacher and SLT will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

13. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary, the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists
- Physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Inclusion Partners
- Social services

14. Admission and accessibility arrangements

The admissions process for Mill Water is managed by Devon County Council. Further info about accessibility can be found in the schools Accessibility Plan, which can be found on the school website.

15. Complaints about SEND provision

Further information can be found in the school's Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website.

16. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

16.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

16.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher every year. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the Local Governing Body.

17. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents

SEN information report

- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives

- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy