Inspiring Learners, Growing Together

Castlethorpe First School • North Crawley CE School • Sherington CE School • Stoke Goldington CE School
St Andrews CE Infant School • Newton Blossomville CE School

The Village Schools Federation aspires to nurture and inspire every child to experience life in all its fullness. Our schools are rooted in inclusive Christian values to enable all to flourish by building knowledge, confidence and resilience for the future. We strive to be the best we can be.
"Whatever we do, we work at it with all our heart"
Colossians 3:23

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Contents

1. Aims, objectives and vision
2. Legislation and guidance
3. Inclusion and equal opportunities
4. Definitions
5. Roles and responsibilities
6. SEN information report
7. Our approach to SEND support
8. Expertise and training of staff
9. Links with external professional agencies
10. Admission and accessibility arrangements
11. Complaints about SEND provision
12. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements
13. Links with other policies and documents

1. Aims, objectives and vision

This policy aims to support inclusion for all and is in line with our teaching and learning policy and equal opportunities policy. We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to flourish and support them to meet their full potential.
We strive to foster nurturing and enriching environments where all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can flourish. Our commitment is to identify and understand the unique needs of each individual, personalising provision and support accordingly, recognising every child's uniqueness. We maintain unwavering high aspirations for all our learners with SEND, ensuring their access to a broad, balanced, and enriching curriculum. Our aim is for them to achieve the best possible outcomes—equipping them for the next stages of their education and beyond.

The ~~VSF~~ **Village School Federation (VSF)** ~~schools believe that all children can succeed and reach their full potential, tailored to their individual needs, abilities, and talents. We acknowledge the significance of a nurturing environment where learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) feel supported while also fostering their independence on their developmental journey. Our approach involves looking beyond the external presentation of each learner, enabling us to fully understand their specific needs. We are committed to continually reflecting on best practice, ensuring that the provision we offer effectively facilitates the progress of all our pupils, empowering them to thrive in their educational experiences.~~

We believe that every child can succeed, flourish, and reach their full potential. We recognise and celebrate each learner's unique strengths, abilities, and talents, providing an inclusive and nurturing environment where children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) feel valued, supported, and empowered to develop their independence.

By looking beyond a learner's outward presentation, we seek to understand their individual needs and remove barriers to learning. Through reflective practice and a commitment to continuous improvement, we provide personalised support that enables all pupils to make meaningful progress, experience success, and thrive within our school community.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

The VSF Inclusion Lead is Mrs Adey Underwood senco@villageschoolsfederation.co.uk

The SEND Governor is Mrs Frances Gale.

2. Legislation and guidance

- The Village Schools Federation SEND Policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice and 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 Handbook, which sets out governors' 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

3. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our schools 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. We raise aspirations and expectations of pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities to ensure they achieve success and achieve the best possible outcomes.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

4. Definitions

4.1 Special educational needs

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years defines SEND as:
'A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.' Department for Education and Department of Health January 2015.
The Code of Practice says that children of school age or young people have a special educational need or disability if they:
'Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of other children and young people of the same age and; have a disability which stops or holds up them from making use of facilities and support provided for others of the same age in mainstream settings.'

4.2 Disability

The Equality Act 2010 says a child or young person is disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment. The impairment must be expected to last longer than a year and has a large effect on their day-to-day life.

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

4.3 The 4 areas of need

There are four key areas of need as defined within the SEN Code of Practice:

~~Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.~~
Pupils may have needs that span more than one area of need, and these needs can change over time as they develop and progress.

- Communication and Interaction (C&I)

- Cognition and Learning (C&L)
- Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH)
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs (S/P)

Additional factors such as disability, attendance, health, and English as an Additional Language (EAL) are considered when assessing the whole child. The SENCo works closely with teachers to track and identify concerns through baseline data, assessments, and feedback from teachers, parents, and external services

In line with the Code of Practice for SEND, all schools within the VSF fully acknowledge that any form of suspension or exclusion cannot be given in relation to the areas of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Children within our schools may be identified as having such needs and placed on the SEND register for additional support to facilitate their learning. Some pupils may possess Education Health Care Plans, necessitating a higher level of bespoke provision to meet their individual requirements effectively. Our commitment is to ensure that all children receive the appropriate resources and opportunities to thrive academically and socially.

Children in our schools may be identified as having Special Educational Needs or Disability and placed on the SEND register as school support in order to receive further provision to aid their learning. Some children in our schools may have SEN Support Plans or Education Health Care Plans and need a higher level of bespoke provision.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The SENCO

The ~~Senco~~ **SENCo** will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the Executive Headteacher and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have a SEN Support Plan or Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)
- Complete EHCP Reviews and report outcomes to the LEA
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and 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
- Work with the Executive Headteacher and governors to make sure the schools meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the schools keep up to date with government proposals for example Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan
- Make sure the schools keep their records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the Executive Headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the Executive Headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the schools offer or can access, and 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
- With the Executive Headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

5.2 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer through termly cluster meetings
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favorably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans

- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the schools and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND

5.3 The SEND link governor

The SEND link governor is Mrs Frances Gale.

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the schools and update the governing board on this
- Work with the Executive Headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the schools

5.4 The Executive Headteacher

- The Executive Headteacher will:
- Work with the SENCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

5.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- 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 SENCO 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 their aspirations for the pupil

5.6 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 on the SEND register 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 termly 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 written report on the pupil's progress
- Where a support plan is in place termly review meetings will be arranged

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

5.7 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 through their one-page profile
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Sharing pupil voice through the 'One Page Profile'

The pupil's views will be considered in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

6. 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.

7. Our approach to SEND support

7.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

A Graduated Response to SEND

Early Concerns

The progress made by all ~~students~~ pupils is regularly monitored and reviewed. Initially, concerns registered by teachers, parents/carers or other agencies are addressed by appropriate differentiation within the classroom and a record is kept of strategies used. This can be then used in later discussions if concerns persist. An initial concerns form will be completed by the class teacher and sent to the SENCo detailing areas of concern, strategies used and interventions completed to date. This will then be followed up by the SENCo in partnership with class teachers, support staff and parents to ensure appropriate provision is put in place to support progress.

A pupil with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may benefit from a variety of provisions tailored to address their specific requirements. Such provisions are comprehensively detailed in their individual documentation and encompass both emotional and social support, in addition to academic assistance. Provisions are dynamic and subject to change based on ongoing review and evaluation processes. For additional resources, the Milton Keynes Council website offers insights into the Local Authority's provision outside of school, accessible through the Local Offer. Furthermore, schools are dedicated to enhancing accessibility and each maintains an accessibility plan aimed at increasing disabled learners' participation in the curriculum. This plan outlines strategies for improving the physical environment and ensuring the availability of accessible information for disabled learners.

Quality First Teaching (QFT)

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) makes it clear that teachers are responsible for the progress and development of all pupils in their class – and that high quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupil needs. All teachers provide high quality teaching strategies along with the targeted Interventions in place.

The Graduated Response

The VSF schools operate in accordance with the principles outlined in the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), implementing a graduated response tailored to individual needs. Initially, we ensure that all pupils benefit from quality first teaching, which encompasses a broad and balanced curriculum that is appropriately differentiated. For some children with SEND, additional support tailored specifically to their outcomes may be required, particularly if they have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, necessitating a more personalised approach.

We understand the importance of a reflective practice and employ a plan, do, review cycle for each child. This iterative process allows our schools to track progress effectively and adapt provisions as necessary. By embracing this graduated response, we strive to enhance the learning experience for

our SEND pupils while ensuring that best practices and innovative interventions are continually assessed and integrated into our educational framework.

The framework for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) support is centered on a systematic four-part cycle:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

Initially, schools must thoroughly **assess** the strengths and difficulties of the pupil. Following this assessment, it is essential to **plan** appropriate interventions aimed at improving educational outcomes. The subsequent phase involves implementing these plans effectively. Finally, schools should **review** the impact of the interventions to determine necessary adjustments, thereby engaging in a continuous cycle of improvement.

According to the Code of Practice section 6.44, schools are tasked with removing barriers to learning and establishing effective special educational provision for identified pupils.

Multi-Vulnerabilities

We know and recognise that young people often experience multi-vulnerabilities, which present further barriers and challenges that we must support the learners and their families to overcome. We have identified children who exhibit three key vulnerabilities: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Safeguarding, and Pupil Premium. We are particularly robust and meticulous in our monitoring and tracking of these young individuals to ensure that they are fully accessing and achieving well across all areas of the curriculum and school life. Our commitment to their success is unwavering.

Statutory Assessment of Needs (EHCP- Education Health Care Plan)

Where (despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities of the pupil) the child has not made expected progress, or the child has a diagnosis of specific needs that need ongoing specialist support, the school or parents/carers should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. The evidence gathered through the regular view of interventions will help the Local Authority (LA) in determining when this statutory assessment of needs is required. The school will provide a detailed record of provision, evidencing the impact of outcomes set over a considerable period of time and indicate what they would do with additional funding to meet the needs of the child. Where an EHC plan is in place, reviews will take place termly with the class teacher, parent and SENCO. One of these meetings will take the form of an Annual Review where progress is monitored and provision reviewed.

How do we identify and support students with SEND

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings, where appropriate. We will also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO by completing an initial concerns form. Following this the SENCO would discuss concerns with the class teacher and observe the pupil. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying, changes in the home environment or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

7.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the parents involving the pupil if appropriate. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We consider any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's electronic record.

We will formally request parents' permission if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

7.3 Levels of support

School-based SEN provision

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. 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 notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. 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.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

7.4 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

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

- Tracking pupils' progress, through monitoring, Sonar Assessment and moderation
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Gathering pupil voice
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from parents
- Reporting to governors throughout the year

8. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The SENCO receives the centralised training offer from the LEA Inclusion Team and identifies specific training courses to match development needs.

The SENCO coaches 1:1 support staff in class in order to develop practice and model strategies. In-house training is regularly scheduled in to staff meeting time.

9. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises the requirement to meet the needs of every pupil and seeks the guidance of external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses/ health visitors
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)

- Mental health support workers
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

10. Admission and accessibility arrangements

10.1 Admission arrangements

No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need. In line with the Equality Act 2010 we will not discriminate against disabled children in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. We will use our best endeavours to provide effective educational provision.

Children with an Education Health Care Plan

All admission authorities are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to a school a child with an Education, Health Care Plan that names that school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and the council will therefore admit such children whether the admission number has been reached or not.

Children with Special Educational Needs with no Education Health Care Plan

Children with special educational needs will be treated as fairly as any other applicant. The law does not permit refusal of admission because it is claimed that the school cannot cater for the child's special educational needs and the council will consider such applications on the basis of the published oversubscription criteria.

10.2 Accessibility arrangements

The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and Accessibility legislation. Although our buildings are not designed for full wheelchair accessibility, however some areas are accessible for wheelchair users.

10.3 Transition

We recognise that the transition to different schools can be a daunting experience for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Consequently, each of our village schools provides tailored transition support for pupils entering or leaving at any stage of their education. We have established strong partnerships with our feeder schools and nurseries to ensure that our learners with SEND feel confident and capable in adapting to their new environment.

11. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the SENCO. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the Executive Headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy: https://www.thevillageschoolsfederation.co.uk/policies/

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint..

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

12. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

12.1 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.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

12.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the SENCO and the Executive Headteacher every year. It may also be updated to reflect any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure as necessary.

It will be approved annually by the governing board.

13. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents **and to be read in conjunction with:**

- 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
- **Intimate Care Policy**

Reviewed	September 2026
Approved by governors:	
Next Review	September 2027