

Willow Nursery School

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy and Information Report

Autumn 2025

This policy complies with the statutory requirements laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010:
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years (2015)
- Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations
- Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school based providers (Sept 2025)

It is updated annually. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions policy
- Behaviour policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Equal opportunities policy
- Disability Equality Scheme
- More Able Learners Policy

This policy has been developed by the SENCo (Clair Howe) in liason with the head teacher (Leigh Davies), the school's SEND governor (Gloria Martin), the staff and the parents and young children with SEND. It will be reviewed annually.

Definition of SEN

By law, a child or young person has special educational needs if he/she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her (Children and Families Act 2014, part 3 20 (1)) and the educational provision that is required to meet the needs is 'special'. According to the Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3 20 (2), a young person has such a difficulty if she/he experiences

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of same age peers, or
- s/he has a disability which prevents him (or her) from making use of (educational) facilities 'of a kind generally provided for' same age peers in mainstream educational institutions.

Definition of Disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010. This is defined as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. According to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) 'long term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This may include children and young people with long term medical conditions for whom adjustments will be made as required by the Equality Act 2014.

Values and Beliefs

At Willow Nursery School we are guided in our policy and provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) by the same principles which underpin our objectives for all children in the school.

- We believe that all children are unique young individuals, whose varying needs are best met in a structured social setting, giving a degree of individual attention in a range of groups and where a team of qualified staff celebrate successes as part of their positive view of children.
- Through our shared values, we aim to ensure that our theory and practice concerning all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are addressed as an integral part of the whole school development
- We aim to ensure that difficulties are identified early so that we can address concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- We work in partnership with parents, carers and children, the Local Authority and other outside agencies.

In seeking to secure these objectives, and in light of measures within the Children and Families Act 2014, Governors, Headteacher and staff are familiarised with the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) We support the professional development of all staff to enable them to identify, support, assess, do, review and provide for the needs of all children with SEND – whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Aims

The aims of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy and practice at Willow Nursery School are:

- To make reasonable adjustments for those with a disability by taking action to increase access to the curriculum, the environment and to printed information
- To ensure that children and young people with SEN engage in the activities in the nursery school alongside all other pupils.
- To reduce barriers to progress relating to Special Educational Needs
- To use our best endeavours to secure special educational provision for pupils for whom this is required, that is “additional to and different from” that provided within the differentiated curriculum, to better respond to the four broad areas of need:
 1. Communication and interaction
 2. Cognition and learning
 3. Social, emotional and mental health
 4. Sensory/physical
- To request, monitor and respond to parent/carers’ and pupils’ views in order to evidence high levels of confidence and partnership.
- To ensure a high level of staff expertise to meet pupil need, through well-targeted continuing professional development.
- To support pupils with medical conditions to achieve full inclusion in all nursery school activities by ensuring consultation with health and social care professionals in order to meet the medical needs of pupils.
- To work in co-operative and productive partnership with the Local Authority and other outside agencies, to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.

1. The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at Willow Nursery School

Willow Nursery School is a Local Authority Nursery School. We make provision for children with many differing special educational need including communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning needs, social, emotional and mental health issues and sensory difficulties. We ensure that our admission arrangements for children do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs.

2. Information about the school's policies for the identification and assessment of children with special educational needs

The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) states that children's special educational needs are generally thought of in the following broad areas of need and support:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Sensory and/ or physical needs
- We use the Central Bedfordshire Council Document, Graduated approach (2023) to guide our actions and help assess the level of children's needs.
- Staff use their professional skills of observation and their understanding of child development to monitor all children within the setting, in order to begin to identify children who may have SEN.
- Relationships are built with parents to promote trust so they feel more comfortable in disclosing and discussing sensitive issues.
- We will listen to parents concerns about a child's behaviour in their home environment. We will refer children to the appropriate service, for assessment or support, if a parent has significant concerns.
- Concerns about children are always discussed initially with other team members in the knowledge that skilled observation and assessment will follow. These discussions may be informal or organised by the SENCo, but always with sensitivity to matters of confidentiality.
- We provide and organise a broad curriculum flexible enough to meet the differing needs of all children. This should be informed by subject co-ordinators, SENCo, key workers and IEPs as appropriate.
- We use data to monitor individual children's progress compared to their peers. We analyse this data as a staff and note children who have made little or no progress.
- We carry out a 2 year progress check on our 2-3 year old children and we discuss any concerns that may arise from these.
- A 3 year check is being completed by the health team. They arrange to discuss any issues with nursery staff/SENDCo and this will be discussed with parents.
- If a child continues to make little or no progress then a decision is made to provide additional support.
- If after receiving support through SEN support Stage 1, the child continues to make little or no progress, then additional external support is sought.
- Written documents are kept on children –Additional care should be taken for children with SEND, with specific targets set in IEPs which are reviewed when appropriate and at least termly. These

should also include specific strategies derived from staff expertise and consultation with SENCo, parents, outside agencies etc.

- Records completed by teachers and teaching assistants inform written requests for Formal Assessment.
- Teachers and teaching assistants consult with parents and are party to reviews, supported or guided by the SENCo.
- The SENCo meets with the SEN workers once every week to discuss individual children who may need support and to provide guidance on how these children's needs will be met.
- SEN appears as a standing item on the agenda of the weekly whole staff meeting. The SENCo will brief staff on IEP targets, assessment dates etc. Staff should contribute any current issues.
- The SENCo conducts reviews for children with Education and Health Care Plans on a six monthly basis in line with SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (2015).

At Willow Nursery School, we also consider that although the following are not Special Educational Needs, they may have an impact on children's progress and attainment:

- Disability (the Code of Practice outlines the 'reasonable adjustment' duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation- these alone do not constitute SEN)
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked after Child
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman

3. Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have EHC Plans, including

a) How the school evaluates the effectiveness of its provision.

Each review of a SEND Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan (IEP) is informed by the views of the pupil, parents and the school staff in order to see whether adequate progress is being made.

Individual interventions used with children are constantly being reflected upon and adapted to make improvements to meet the needs of the child involved.

The effectiveness of the special provision is also discussed at Education, Health and Care Plan annual reviews. The SENCo and the head teacher provide information to the Governing Body about the implementation of the policy which informs their understanding. The school also evaluates the effectiveness of its provision by head teacher observation, by ensuring that the SEND file and paperwork are kept up to date and through the use of parent questionnaires.

b) The school's arrangements for assessing and reviewing the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

Every child at Willow Nursery School has his/her progress tracked every term. In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments. If these assessments do not show adequate progress the SEN support plan will be reviewed and adjusted. We will make every effort to ensure that parent/families and the child will be actively involved at all stage in this process.

c) The school's approach to teaching children with special educational needs

We make every effort to ensure high quality differentiated teaching in our nursery school for all our children.

All children will have a keyworker who will be the main contact for families. The SENCo will also support families who have a child with SEN. All staff adapt their teaching depending on the individual child and differentiation may happen in many different ways according to need. We are a fully inclusive school which takes reasonable action to ensure that children can access all learning opportunities. All staff are aware of individual children's targets so that they can teach them appropriately, even if they have some 1:1 support during their time at nursery school. Key workers analyse data and put strategies in place to ensure their needs are being met appropriately.

A member of staff is available for two sessions per week to work with children who need additional support to meet their needs. This involves small group work, some 1:1 work and focuses on teaching what the children need to learn next.

d. How the school adapts the curriculum and learning environment for children with special educational needs

The curriculum and learning environment is adapted as necessary depending on the needs of individual children e.g. if a child has communication needs, a system using pictures (PECS) to help them communicate may be used. Reasonable adjustments are made to meet the range of special educational needs and disability (SEND) The curriculum is differentiated according to need and class lists are kept to identify what all children need to work on next in their learning. Individual learning plans are put in place to ensure that children with special educational needs can fulfil their potential and be suitably challenged. If a child needs a visual timetable to help them to manage the nursery routine more smoothly, this will be put into place.

- With regards to accessibility, the nursery school has a policy on 'Inclusion' and 'Disability Equality Scheme' that can also be referred to.

Accessibility

- Willow Nursery School is on one level, entrances do not have steps, and several doorways are extra wide.
- Teaching rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4 have wash hand basins. Teaching rooms 1, 2, and 3 have low level toilets.
- We have pushchair parks for parents to leave pushchairs when bringing their children to nursery.
- Any changes to the building are considered with regard to accessibility for wheelchair users and other physically disabled children and adults.
- The outside areas of the nursery school are secure
- We are always happy to discuss individual access requirements when necessary
- We seek support from the local authority for translation purposes for families with English as an additional language who may require this service.

e. Additional support for learning that is available for a child with special educational needs

The degree and level of support required for each child with SEND to make good progress will vary. A full list of interventions we offer is on our provision list.

Willow Nursery School Provision List

Type of SEND for which provision is made in the school	Type of Provision
Communication and Interaction Needs: • Autistic spectrum disorder • Speech, language and communication needs	• Speaking, listening and communication opportunities developed across the curriculum • Adult support for interaction with peers • Small group work • Lift off to Language groups • Sail into sounds groups • Setting Individual targets • Speech and language therapy service • Involvement of other agencies – Early Years Support Service, Multi disciplinary assessment (Edwin Lobo)

	• Visual timetable, signing, symbols photographs, objects of reference • Specialised resources – PECS • 1:1 support
Cognition and Learning Needs	• Differentiated Planning • Enhanced learning environment • Increased modelling and scaffolding learning • Small group work • Setting Individual targets • Specialised resources – PECS, visual timetable etc • Involvement of other agencies – Early Years Support Service, Multi disciplinary assessment (Edwin Lobo) • 1:1 support
Social, Emotional and Mental Health	• Nursery School policy – Personal, Social and Emotional Development • Consistent expectations • Small group work • Behaviour Logs • Setting Individual targets • Involvement of other agencies – Early Years Support Service, Multi disciplinary assessment (Edwin Lobo) • 1:1 support
Sensory and/or Physical needs	• Staff awareness of the implications of a particular impairment • Setting Individual targets • Involvement of other agencies – Early Years Support Service, Multi disciplinary assessment (Edwin Lobo), educational psychologist, visually impaired team etc • 1:1 support

f. How the school enables children with special educational needs to engage in activities of the school (including physical activities) together with all other children within the school.

All trips and activities offered to children at Willow Nursery School include children with special educational needs. Where necessary, the school will use resources to provide additional adults support to enable the safe participation of the child in the activity. Risk assessments will be carried out. Additional support is also given to children who may need it at the end of the school day when parents arrive to collect their children.

g. Support which is available for improving the emotional and social development of pupils with special educational needs

At Willow Nursery School, every child has a key worker who will ensure that children's pastoral and personal care needs are supported appropriately. The school has a behaviour policy which refers to how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. If further emotional social development is needed, an 'Early Help Assessment' can be completed with parents in order to access external services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMS) and CHUMS (Mental Health and Wellbeing Service for Children and Young People). Spaces are made available for children who need a quiet and calming area. Small group work is carried out with children who need additional support in their personal, emotional and social skills.

4. The name and contact details of the SEN co-ordinator

The SENCo at Willow Nursery school is Clair Howe, who is a qualified teacher, and has the National Qualification for SEN co-ordination and in addition has a Masters Degree in Early Years Education. Contact details for Clair Howe, SENCo are 01582 662600, chowe@willownursery.co.uk, available Monday-Thursday.

5. Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured.

All teachers and teaching assistants at Willow Nursery School have had training in varying aspects of special educational needs. In the most recent training, all staff were briefed on different strategies that could be used with children with special educational needs. This was provided by the SEND team. Zoe Tyler has completed some training on Special Educational Needs. Charlotte England has completed a Level 2 and 3 Autism course. Clair Howe and Joanne McGowan attended a training course on Developmental Co-ordination Disorder. Clair Howe, Lisa Brinkley, Joanne McGowan and Rebecca Cashmore have attended the 'Lift Off to Language' training offered by the speech and language therapists in the area. Clair Howe and Joanne McGowan have attended the 'Sail into sounds' training

offered by the speech and language team. The whole staff have recently completed training on 'Understanding Emotions and Behaviour' led by the SEND team. Clair Howe is currently completing a level 2 course on 'Understanding Distressed Behaviour in Children' and Charlotte England is currently completing a level 2 course on 'Understanding Behaviour that Challenges'. The staff have training booked for January 2026 on 'Team Teach level 1'. If a training need is identified beyond the staff's specialism's we access the central Bedfordshire's CPD programme to enable us to update our knowledge or we access external providers to offer 'in house' training.

6. Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured

The school addresses this on an individual basis and more information can be found in the schools Disability Equality Scheme and Inclusion policy. Where external providers recommend the use of equipment or facilities that the school does not have we consider this equipment and will purchase if required and if funding allows.

7. The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs, and involving them in their education

All parents of children at Willow Nursery School are invited to discuss the progress of their children once a term. In addition, staff are usually available at dropping off and picking up times. Parents/carers will be invited to all planning and reviews of provision for SEND and are actively supported to contribute to assessment, planning and review. Wherever possible annual and interim reviews will include other agencies involved with the child. Information will be made accessible for parents.

8. The arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs, and involving them in their education

When a child has been identified as having special educational needs, s/he will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning.

9. The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school

Willow Nursery School has a formal complaints procedure for any complaint made by parents/carers (see complaints policy). This procedure should be followed for any complaint about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents to discuss their initial concerns with their key worker. The SENCO and head teacher may become involved to help resolve any concerns if necessary. If the

issue is still unresolved, the parent/carer may wish to make a formal complaint to the chair of the governing body. If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contacted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the secretary of state for all other cases.

10. How the governing body involves other external organisations, including health and social care, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The governing body have engaged with the following external organisations:

- social care
- speech and language therapists
- paediatricians
- GP's
- educational psychologists
- specialist health services – visual team
- Early Years Support Service
- Local Authority SEND workers
- Early Help Team

11. The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those for arrangements made in accordance with clause 32 (parent partnership services)

Central Bedfordshire Council Special educational needs and disability (SEND) parent, children and young person partnership service–<https://cbSENDiass.org/>

Central Bedfordshire's Local Offer –

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

12. The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education

At Willow Nursery School we are usually the first educational establishment that a child attends. When children have attended previous settings, we work closely with them before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as smooth as possible. Transitions from the younger nursery into big nursery and from big nursery to primary school will be carefully planned with parents and children to ensure smooth transitions. A transition plan (as part of the IEP) will be devised, detailing how we will ensure a smooth transition which will be tailored to a child's needs. We have close links with the local primary schools and usually hold specific transition meetings which involve handing over information to primary schools.

13. Information on where the local authority's local offer is published

The local authority's local offer is published on

[https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/15/special_educational_needs_and_disability -
local offer](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/15/special_educational_needs_and_disability_-_local_offer)

We advise parents and families without access to the internet, to make an appointment with the SENCo for support to gain the information they require.

Next review on: Autumn 2026