

Thelwall Infant School



Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Reviewed: October 2023

Completed by: Cathy Houda (SENDCO)

Next Review date: October 2024

Signed: _____ Headteacher

Date

Signed: _____ Chair of Governors

Date

Thelwall Community Infant School Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Thelwall Infant School is an inclusive school. We take safeguarding very seriously and all of our policies are developed with a high priority on children's safety and in the light of our safeguarding policy. All of our school policies are interlinked and should be read and informed by all other policies. In particular, the SEND policy is linked to behaviour, anti-bullying, supporting children with medical needs and curriculum policies.

Warrington's Local Offer

The purpose of the local offer is to enable parents and young people to see more clearly what services are available in their area and how to access them. It includes provision from birth to 25, across education, health and social care. This is available from the [website](#) .

In addition there is a specific [website](#) that outlines Warrington' local offer for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities. It includes information about a wide range of services and opportunities available for children with SEND as well as information for parents about benefits, and how Warrington aims to support children through education, health and social care.

It is our aim as part of the Warrington Local Offer that our SEN provision will be constantly improved through ensuring that we work together to identify how the offer can continue to ensure we are meeting the needs of children and young people with additional needs and their families.

SEND Information is available from our website and is a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions. The website also includes a link to Warrington's Local Offer for parents and children with SEN or disabilities.

This SEND Policy is written to comply with the 2014 Children and Families Act and its SEND Code of Practice together with the Equality Act 2010.

The SEND team at Thelwall Community Infant School

Enquiries about an individual child's progress should be addressed at first to the class teacher since they are the person who knows the child best. Other enquiries can be addressed to Cathy Houda, SENDCO. Please make an appointment if you wish to speak to the SENDCO.

Headlines from the 2015 Code of Practice. From September 2015

- No more statements will be issued by the Local Authority. Statements have been replaced by **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans)** which can be used to support children from birth to 25 years.
- School Action and School Action Plus have been replaced by one school based category of need known as **"Special Educational Needs Support" (SENS)**. All children are closely monitored, and their progress tracked each term. Those SENS are additionally tracked by the SENDCO.

- There are four broad categories of SEND:
 - Communication and interaction
 - Cognition and learning
 - Social, emotional and mental health
 - Physical and sensory.

We cater for children in all these categories of SEND.

- We are working more closely with parents and children to ensure that we take into account the child's own views and aspirations and the parents' experience of and hopes for their child. Parents are invited to be involved at every stage of planning and reviewing SEND provision for their child.
- All children benefit from "Quality First Teaching": this means that teachers expect to assess, plan and teach all children at the level which allows them to make progress with their learning. In addition, we implement some focused interventions to target particular skills.

Defining SEND

The 2015 Code of Practice says that:

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

SEND at Thelwall Infant School and Nursery

Our objectives are:

- To identify, at the earliest possible opportunity, barriers to learning and participation for pupils with SEN
- To ensure that every child experiences success in their learning and achieves to the highest possible standard
- To enable all children to participate in lessons fully and effectively
- To value and encourage the contribution of all children to the life of the school
- To work in partnership with parents
- To work with the Governing Body to enable them to fulfil their statutory monitoring role with regard to the Policy Statement for SEN
- To work closely with external support agencies, where appropriate, to support the need of individual pupils
- To ensure that all staff have access to training and advice to support quality teaching and learning for all pupils.

Around 17% of our children are either at SENS (SEN support) or have EHC Plans (Educational Health Care Plans). This is above the national average and means that all teachers expect to have children with SEN in their classes. Types of SEN which we currently have in school, during 2023-24 include children with a diagnosis as well as those with learning profiles consistent with the diagnosis:

Communication and Interaction

- This can include difficulties with producing or responding to expressive or receptive language. difficulties uttering speech sounds. difficulties understanding spoken and other communications from others. This can include children with autistic spectrum disorder.

Cognition and Learning

- *Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) Pupils with MLD have much greater difficulty than their peers in acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills and in understanding concepts. They may also have associated speech and language delay, low self-esteem, low levels of concentration and under developed social skills.*
- *Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) Pupils may also have associated difficulties in mobility and co-ordination, communication and perception and acquisition of self-help skills. Pupils with SLD will need support in all areas of the curriculum. They may also require teaching of self-help, independence and social skills.*
- *Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) in addition to very severe learning difficulties, pupils have other significant difficulties, such as physical disabilities, sensory impairment or a severe medical condition.*
- *Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dys-praxia.*

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

- *Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as autistic spectrum disorder, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.*

Physical and Sensory

- Hearing/visual impairment
- physical difficulty
- Sensory processing difficulty

Identifying children at SENS (SEN Support)

Children with SEN are identified by one of the three assessment routes all of which are part of the overall approach to monitoring progress of all pupils:

- The progress of every child is monitored at termly pupil progress meetings. Where children are identified as not making progress in spite of Quality First Teaching they are discussed with the headteacher (and/or SENCO) and a plan of action is agreed. This may include intervention, adaptations to teaching or specific support.
- Class teachers are continually aware of children's learning. If they observe a child, as recommended by the 2014 Code of Practice, is making less than expected progress, given their age and individual circumstances, they will seek to identify a cause. This can be characterised by progress which:
 - Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline

- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life.

- Parents sometimes ask us to look more closely at their child's learning. We take all parental requests seriously and investigate them all. Frequently, the concern can be addressed by Quality First Teaching or some parental support. Otherwise, the child is placed at SENS on the SEN register, after the school SEND screening and identification procedure has been followed.

The school has an SEND screening identification policy which teachers will follow in consultation with the SENDCO. If after following the steps in the identification procedure they feel a child needs to be placed and supported on the SEND register they do this in consultation with both parents and SENDCO.

Although the school can identify special educational needs and make provision to meet those needs, we do not offer diagnoses. Parents are advised to contact their GP if they think their child may have ASD or ADHD or some other disability. School also liaise with outside agencies who can further support and assess to further support the identification of children's specific learning needs. These agencies include:

- Educational Psychologist
- Child Development Centre
- Visual and auditory support team
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech and Language support service
- School Health Advisor
- Schools link mental health team practitioner

Working with Parents and Children

We aim to have good and informative relationships with all of our parents. If a child is experiencing difficulties, parents will be informed at the earliest appropriate point by means of a meeting to discuss the concerns. This should ensure that it doesn't come as a surprise to a parent to learn that their child is being identified as having SEN. Once the point is reached where concerns are significant (as outlined above) and despite what has already been put in place there are still concerns, then the class teacher will ask parents to meet with them to do the following;

- Go through the initial screening process and then agree if their child is to be placed at SENS.
- Discuss any assessments that have been completed or that are going to be completed.
- Agree a plan and provision for the next term

This is part of the graduated approach cycle of "Assess, Plan, Do, Review" required in the Code of Practice.

Depending on their age and interest, the child may be invited to attend all or part of the meeting. Thereafter, parents and children are invited to a meeting at least each term to review progress made, set targets and agree provision for the next term.

Paperwork for children at SENS (SEN Support)

As part of the identification process for SENS the following paperwork is completed with input from parents:

- SEN information form
- Initial Screening Tool

Once there is agreement that the child needs SENS the teacher will do the following;

- Use the SEN descriptors indicated in the initial screening tool to clarify the areas in which the child is having difficulty.
- Consult with the SENDCO and set up an Individual provision tracker for the child.
- Meet with parents to share and agree the findings, plans for provision for the term and the intended outcomes.
- Continue the assess, plan, review, do cycle each term.

Moving to an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)

If children fail to make progress, in spite of high quality, targeted support at SENS, we may apply for the child to be assessed for an EHC Plan. Generally we apply for an EHC Plan if:

- The child is Looked After and therefore additionally vulnerable
- The child has a disability which is lifelong and which means that they will always need support to learn effectively
- The child's achievements are so far below their peers that we think it likely the child may at some point benefit from special school provision

Children who we think will manage in mainstream schools, albeit with support, are less often assessed for EHC Plans. Having a diagnosis (e.g. of ASD, ADHD or dyslexia) does not mean that a child needs an EHC Plan. If the application for an EHC Plan is successful, a member of the Local Authority will call a meeting for parents, the child and the school together with any health or social care professionals who are involved with the family. The meeting will record the child's strengths, their dreams and aspirations as well as the barriers they face. Following the meeting, the LA will produce the EHC Plan which will record the decisions made at the meeting.

Teaching and Learning

We believe that all children learn best with the rest of their class. Our aim is for all children to be working independently, in class, at the cusp of their potential. Children with SEN and disabilities are entitled to be taught by their teacher, not always by the TA. Teachers aim to spend time each week working with all children with SEN, individually or as part of a group.

When allocating additional TA support to children, our focus is on outcomes, not hours: we aim to put sufficient support to enable the child to reach their challenging targets, but without developing a learned dependence on an adult.

The school has a range of interventions available which are listed and costed on a provision map. When considering an intervention, we look first at the child's profile of learning in order that we can select the intervention which is best matched to the child.

Targets for children at SENS are deliberately challenging in the attempt to close attainment gap between the children and their peers. Interventions are often crucial in closing these gaps, so are monitored closely by both the class teacher who monitors progress towards the targets during the intervention and by the SENDCO who monitors overall progress after the intervention.

- Interventions are planned in accordance with the guidance specific to the intervention and reviewed regularly
- Children's progress towards their targets is assessed and recorded
- A decision is then made as to whether to continue the intervention, to swap to a new intervention or to allow a period of consolidation in class

The SENDCO monitors interventions to identify "what works".

Adaptations to the curriculum teaching and Learning Environment

Thelwall Infant School is disability friendly. The school is one level, corridors are wide and we have an easy access toilet. We generally find that no additional adaptations to the building are necessary for children with physical disabilities.

Other adaptations to the physical environment will be made, as appropriate, to accommodate children with other sensory disabilities.

All of our classrooms are inclusion friendly: we aim to teach in a way that will support children with tendencies towards dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD etc. This is good practice to support all children but is vital for those who particularly need it. All of our children access the full National Curriculum and we recognise achievement and expertise in all curricular areas. As part of normal class differentiation, curricular content and ideas can be simplified and made more accessible by using visual, tactile and concrete resources.

Staff Expertise

All of our teachers are trained to work with children with SEND. Some are very experienced and others less so, but all have access to advice, information, resources and training to enable them to teach all children effectively. We offer training and self-help opportunities through access to in-house or LA courses, provision of books or guidance towards useful websites.

Some of our TAs have speech and language training which helps them to support children with communication difficulties. Other TAs have expertise and training on other areas or specific interventions. All TAs work with children with SEND.

Children with social, emotional and mental health needs

A child displaying behaviour that is not within the boundaries of the general school expectations is not classified as having SEN. All children's behaviour is responded to consistently in line with our Behaviour Policy, although reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate individual needs. If a child shows consistent unwanted behaviours and is not

responding to the normal rewards and sanctions within our behaviour policy, then the class teacher will assess the child's needs, taking into account family circumstances and the child's known history of experiences. If the child's behaviour is felt to be a response to adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) for example a trauma such as bereavement, parental separation etc. we will work in close partnership with parents and carers to provide the appropriate support either through interventions in school or via support from external agencies.

If parents and school are concerned that the child may have mental health needs, for example with anxiety or anger management, the school are able to offer a range of social skills or therapeutic interventions. These are generally delivered by trained TAs within a Nurture Group, who develop good, trusting relationships with the children. If further support is needed the school uses the Children and Young Persons Mental Health Service to get expert advice and guidance.

The school has a zero tolerance to bullying, especially to children with SEND. We will actively investigate all allegations and if there is cause, work with both the bully and the victim to improve their social skills.

Transition Arrangements

Transition into and within school.

We understand how difficult it is for children and parents as they move into a new class or a new school and will do what we can, according to the individual needs of the child, to make transitions between classes, including from pre-schools and nurseries as smooth as possible.

This may include, for example:

- Additional meetings for the parents and child with the new teacher
- Additional visits to the classroom environment in order to identify where the toilets are, where the pegs are etc.
- Opportunities to take photographs of key people and places in order to make a transition booklet.

Enhanced transition arrangements are tailored to meet individual needs.

Governors

It is the statutory duty of the governors to ensure that the school follows its responsibilities to meet the needs of children with SEND following the requirements of the Code of Practice 2014. The Governor with particular responsibility for SEND is Sharon Passey. She meets with the SENCO at least termly to discuss procedures and actions taken by the school.

Complaints

The school works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. All complaints are taken seriously and are heard through the school's complaints policy and procedure.

Equal Opportunities

The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all, regardless of race, faith, gender or capability in all aspects of school. We promote self and mutual respect and a caring and non-judgemental attitude throughout the school.

Review Framework

The policy will be reviewed annually (or sooner in the event of revised legislation or guidance).