



## Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery

### Special Educational Needs Policy

<b>Name/Title of responsible committee/individual:</b>	Curriculum Committee
<b>Date issued:</b>	February 2020
<b>Review frequency:</b>	Annual
<b>Target audience:</b>	All stakeholders

The Governing Body shall conduct the School with a view to promoting high standards of educational achievement.

Merry Hill Infant School and Nursery is committed to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.

The School will promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and will actively challenge pupils, staff or parents expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views.

Version	Date	Notes
V1.0		Approved by Curriculum Committee

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# 1 Introduction

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

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE May 2014
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 2015
- Schools SEND Information Report Regulations 2014
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (December 2015)
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils
- Working together to safeguard children (July, 2018)
- Accessible Schools Summary Guidance

## 2 Definitions

The Code of Practice 2015 definition of special educational needs and disability states:

*A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.*

*A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning disability if he or she:*

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

The four broad areas of need stated in the Code of Practice 2014 are:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

## 3 Our Aims

We support and value the abilities of all the pupils in the school including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It is our duty to provide equal opportunities for every child in our care and a safe and fully equipped learning environment which caters to the needs of every child as an individual. We are fully committed to inclusion within the school curriculum and participation, for all children, in every aspect of school life. We provide a creative, exciting and effective learning environment which recognises and responds to individual learning styles. We aim to ensure that each child reaches their full potential by providing the highest standard of "Quality First Teaching".

At Merry Hill we are also committed to supporting every child's mental health and well-being as this can also have a significant impact on their learning. We promote a positive ethos in school, based on the understanding that all children need the foundations of positive mental health to fulfil their potential academically, personally and socially. This SEND Policy should be read in conjunction with our Positive Mental Health and Well-being for Children Policy and our Medical Policy.

## 4 Objectives

- To identify at the earliest opportunity all children who need special consideration to support their physical, sensory, social, emotional, communication or cognitive development.
- To ensure that these children are given appropriate support and/or differentiated learning activities to allow them to access the national curriculum in a positive and effective way.
- To ensure that children with SEND are fully included in all activities of the school in order to promote the highest levels of achievement.
- To seek and take account of the views of the child and, where possible, to involve children with SEND in the planning of their education.
- To work in partnership with parents by accepting and valuing their contribution and involving them fully in decisions made about their children's education.
- To provide parents/carers with user-friendly information about SEND provision and procedures and to be aware of the needs they might have in respect of a disability or communication and linguistic barriers.
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2015.

## 5 Admissions and Inclusion

We are committed to offering an inclusive learning environment and equal access to all children. No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of his or her special educational need or disability. In accordance with the new SEND Code of Practice 2015 and the Equalities Act 2010 the school will also make all reasonable adjustments to provide facilities and assist access for all disabled pupils and will promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled children.

## 6 Children with Medical Needs

The Children and Families Act 2014 places a duty on schools to support children with medical conditions. At Merry Hill we ensure that children with medical conditions are supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may also be disabled and where this is the case, the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

## 7 Partnership with parents

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 recognises the importance of communicating effectively and working in partnership with parents/carers. The school strives to achieve this by:

- having positive attitudes towards parents/carers and respecting the validity of different views and perspectives
- providing regular opportunities for parents/carers to discuss their child's needs with the class teacher and/or the SENCo and encouraging information to be shared between home and school
- acknowledging the importance of parental expertise in relation to their knowledge and understanding of own child
- explaining information and procedures clearly and taking into account the needs of parents/carers with regards to any disability, communication or linguistic barriers they may have
- recognising the pressures a parent/carer may be under because of their child's needs

- seeking parental permission before referring a child to an outside agency, keeping them informed of proceedings and facilitating meetings between parents and the agencies involved with their child.
- listening to parental concerns and dealing with them professionally and sympathetically
- inviting parents/carers to termly Target Review Meetings and providing the opportunity for them to contribute to setting new targets and discussing their child's progress.
- ensuring parents/carers of children with SEND are informed of the Parent Partnership Service, relevant support groups and documents.

Parents/carers are encouraged to work in partnership with the school by:

- informing the school of any concerns regarding their child
- informing the school of any previous involvement from external agencies and/or relevant assessments carried out privately
- meeting regularly with class teacher and/or SENCo to discuss their child's progress
- signing relevant SEND documents and providing written contributions when invited to do so
- fulfilling any obligations under the home/school agreement
- avoiding unnecessary absence for their child

The school has published a SEND Information Report that provides further information for parents about the additional services and agencies that are available to support children with SEND. The report is available on the school website.

## **8 Roles and Responsibilities**

Meeting the needs of children with SEND is the responsibility of the LEA, school, parents, children, health and social services and other agencies. Successful provision therefore requires partnership between all parties involved.

### **8.1 LEA**

The School Relations Code of Practice provides broad guidance on the relationship between LEAs, governing bodies and head teachers in their respective roles in achieving excellence for all children. It expects LEAs, in partnership with schools, to prioritise their statutory duty to promote high standards of education for all children, including those with SEND.

### **8.2 Governing Body**

Merry Hill School Governing Body appoints a member with a specific brief for SEND. The Governing Body ensures that necessary provision is made for any children with SEND. School Governors have a responsibility to ensure that all teachers are made aware of the importance of identifying children with special educational needs, and also of making suitable provision for such children and to support the school's endeavours in this respect.

### **8.3 Headteacher**

The Headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of provision for children with SEND. She will keep the Governing Body fully informed and work closely with the SENCo and SEND Governor.

### **8.4 SENCo**

The key responsibilities of the SENCo are:

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- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy and co-ordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- maintaining the school's SEND Register, Inclusion Register and Provision Map, keeping them regularly updated
- monitoring and updating the SEND policy
- supporting staff with the identification of children with SEND and ensuring a graduated response of support in the form of a cycle of '**Assess, Plan, Do, Review**'
- overseeing the records of all children with SEND - including monitoring Child Friendly Targets and reviews and ensuring that achievable targets are set
- completing paperwork for referrals, Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) requests etc
- advising staff of appropriate strategies to ensure quality first teaching
- providing resources to support children with SEND and ensuring class teachers are provided with copies of external advice reports
- monitoring progress of children with SEND
- liaising with parents of children with SEND as required
- liaising with external agencies and ensuring that their advice is being implemented
- contributing to the in-service training of staff

### **8.5 Class Teacher**

The class teacher is primarily responsible for teaching SEND children in his/her class. All teachers make provision for children with educational special needs through high quality first teaching and differentiated planning. Where a parent/carer raises a concern about their child, the class teacher will collect and assess any evidence, the SENCo will be informed and a decision will be made jointly by parents and staff whether to enter the child's name on the SEND register. (The SEND register is a confidential document). In conjunction with the SENCo, the class teacher ensures that any necessary interventions are put in place, referrals to external agencies made, if required, and progress is monitored carefully.

### **8.6 Learning Support Assistant (LSA)**

The learning support assistants liaise closely with the class teacher and SENCo to implement interventions or work towards targets.

### **8.7 Parents/Carers**

The school encourages parents/carers to play a positive and active role in the education of their child by developing strong home/school links. Parents have a responsibility to communicate regularly with their child's teacher, alerting them to any concerns. Parents/carers of children at all stages on the SEND register are consulted and informed regularly of their child's progress through discussion with the class teacher and/or SENCo. Their views, knowledge and experience are sought, welcomed and valued when assessing, making decisions, implementing targets and reviewing their child's progress. Parents/carers are responsible for working with the school to fulfil their obligations under any home/school agreements.

Parental permission must be gained before referring a child to external agencies for support. Parents have access to information, advice and support during any formal assessment of, or decision-making process relating to their child and his or her special educational needs provision. The SENCo will provide information of such services including Parent Partnership Services.

## 8.8 Pupils

Where appropriate, children are involved in setting their own targets, agreeing and implementing strategies and reviewing their progress. Their views and feelings will be sought and recorded to contribute to Child Friendly Target Sheets and Reviews.

## 9 Roles within the School

- Mrs Melissa Regnier is the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Miss Lacey Bateman is an Assistant Headteacher, Mental Health Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs Gemma Hall is an Assistant Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs Fay Summers is the Co-ordinator of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Mrs Karen Taylor is the Assistant SENCO and HLTA
- Mrs Caroline Loison is our Governor with responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

## 10 Identification and Assessment

At Merry Hill we understand that it is crucial that pupils' needs should be identified and met as early as possible. As already stated there are four main categories of need in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

Whilst these four areas broadly identify the primary needs of a pupil, we also feel that it is important to consider the needs of the whole child, which may also impact on a child's learning. These include:

- health and welfare
- mental health and well being
- English as an additional language (EAL)
- being eligible for free school meals (FSM)
- being a child looked after (CLA)
- being a child of service personnel
- being part of a gypsy, Roma or traveller family (GRT)

Pupil Premium is funding allocated to the school to support children who have been registered as being eligible for free school meals in the last six years, a child looked after for over six months and children of service personnel. Details of how that funding is used are available on the school website.

The class teacher and the SENCO work together closely using whole school tracking data to ensure early identification of special educational needs.

We use a number of additional indicators that alert us to possible special educational needs:

- entry profiles at Nursery
- end of Foundation Stage data
- the following up of teacher concerns
- the following up of parental concerns
- tracking individual progress over time
- information from external services

## **11 Curriculum Access and Provision**

In order to meet the needs of all children, teachers differentiate work according to ability. If a child continues not to make adequate progress when he/she has accessed a range of interventions over a period of time they may be identified as having special educational needs and the school will put in place support in the form of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' through which decisions and actions are revisited and revised. This is called a graduated response. When a child has been identified as having special educational needs, the school provides for these additional needs in a variety of ways including:

- in-class support for small groups with the class learning support assistant (LSA).
- small group withdrawal with a LSA or SENCo
- individual class support/withdrawal
- access to Specialist Teachers and other external support services such as Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists
- staff development/training to promote more effective strategies
- provision of alternative learning material or special equipment
- exceptional Needs Funding (ENF) for adult support or specific resources

A child with SEND will usually have a child friendly 'Target Sheet' where specific targets and the support to ensure the child meets these targets are recorded. These targets are reviewed regularly and when necessary, further targets will be set. Targets may be based on advice from external professionals involved with the child.

The child and their family are at the centre of all decisions made and are actively encouraged to participate fully in this progress

The SENCo oversees every stage of the graduated response through regular assessment and monitoring and will intervene and review the provision if a child is not making adequate progress.

## **12 Education, Health and Care Plans**

In some cases, despite having taken the relevant action, a child may not make adequate progress and the school will, in consultation with the parents apply to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These plans put children and their families at the very centre of the process to make sure their views are heard and understood. They are outcome focused and determine how education, health and social services must work together to meet the needs of the child.

## **13 Collaboration with External Agencies**

The school has access to support from a number of outside agencies including:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Base
- Educational Psychology Service
- Speech and Language Service
- Chessbrook Educational Support Centre
- Behaviour Support from Colnbrook School
- Advisory for Teachers (Early Years, Autism, Sight and Hearing Impairment etc)
- Community Health Team

Advice can be sought in response to requests from class teachers or parents. Where a child has had no previous involvement with an outside agency, the SENCo completes the relevant referral forms to initiate input from the required service with the consent of the parent. In these cases the school must reflect the advice and recommendations given in the child's targets or interventions. Formal reports and/or assessments from an external professional are also required if the school feels it necessary to apply for additional funding for individual children in the form of Exceptional Needs Funding (ENF).

## **14 Links with other schools**

Prior to a child starting at Merry Hill all relevant SEND information is sought from his/her previous school or educational setting. When a child leaves Merry Hill, all of his/her SEND records are transferred to the receiving school. Where possible the SENCo will contact the SENCo of the receiving school to discuss these records in detail and ensure a smooth transition between schools.

## **15 Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND**

The school carefully monitors and evaluates the quality of provision offered to all children, including those with SEND. This is through a variety of methods that include scrutiny of children's work, teacher's planning and regular lesson observations. Each teacher and the SENCo keep Case Studies of individual children with SEND which plot progress during their time at the school. There are regular monitoring meetings where tracking data is used to evaluate progress. Parent and carer views are also regularly sought. The school's SEN Governor also takes an active role in supporting the SENCo by keeping abreast of new developments and helping implement them.

## **16 Training and Resources**

An allocated SEND budget funds resources that can include additional staff, programmes of interventions, equipment, material and training. The school is committed to continuing professional development for all staff. This training may take place within the school or is accessed through the local authority or other professional training bodies. The SENCo regularly attends 'SEND Briefings' which are update meetings for all SENCos to ensure current practice and knowledge within the school.

## **17 Complaints Regarding SEND Provision**

Parents/carers are encouraged to come into the school to talk about any aspect of their child's education. Should it become necessary to make a complaint regarding SEND provision, initial contact should be with the child's class teacher or the SENCo and then the Headteacher. If the problem is not resolved at this stage, the Governors will become involved. The LEA has published

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detailed guidelines for parents/carers who feel it necessary to make a formal complaint if contact with the school has been unsuccessful.

Email: [admin@merryhill.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@merryhill.herts.sch.uk)

Phone: 0208 950 2166

## **18 Reviewing the SEND Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually and contributed to by all stakeholders.