

Old Vicarage School

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) POLICY

This policy, which applies to the whole school, is available upon request; a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

Legal Status:

- Supports the School's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (as amended), particularly Part 1 in relation to curriculum, teaching and assessment taking account of pupils' ages, aptitudes, needs and prior attainment, and Part 8 in relation to effective leadership and promotion of pupils' wellbeing.
- Takes account, where applicable, of Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations. Old Vicarage School is an independent school which is not approved under section 41 of the Children and Families Act 2014. The School therefore distinguishes between SEND duties which apply directly to it and provisions of the SEND Code of Practice which it chooses to follow as good practice. Where the School provides local-authority-funded early education or is otherwise subject to a statutory SEND requirement, the relevant statutory duty will be followed.
- Prepared with regard to the Equality Act 2010, including the School's duties not to discriminate, harass or victimise pupils or prospective pupils, to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and prospective pupils, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services where reasonable, and to comply with the accessibility planning duties in Schedule 10.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015, as currently published), where applicable and otherwise as a framework for good practice.
- **Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers (July 2026, effective 1 September 2026), where applicable; and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, particularly the provisions concerning the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers experienced by some children with SEND.**

Applies to:

- the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the out of school care and extra-curricular activities inclusive of those outside of the normal school hours;
- all staff (teaching and support staff), the proprietors and volunteers working in the school

Related documents:

Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education Policy
Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Development Policy
Curriculum Policy
Assessment Policy
English as an Additional Language Policy

Availability

This policy is made available to parents, staff and pupils in the following ways: on request a copy may be obtained from the School Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of School.
- The Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy at least annually, and earlier where legislation, statutory guidance, regulatory requirements, inspection expectations or School practice changes. Any deficiencies identified through monitoring will be remedied promptly.

Signed:

Date: September 2026

Matthew Adshead
Proprietor

Mrs K Wise
Head of School

Principles

The school aims to identify pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) at the earliest opportunity and offer appropriate provision. Old Vicarage School seeks to offer pupils with Special Educational Needs full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. There is a whole school approach, which involves all staff, in supporting pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties. All peripatetic staff are made aware of each pupil's needs. All staff have a responsibility to differentiate lessons to cater for individual learning needs. Parents / guardians and pupils will be involved fully in the process of the planning and delivery of support. It is the policy of Old Vicarage School that pupils who have been accepted into the school will be offered appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum effectively and fulfil their potential. We are an inclusive school, determined to meet the needs of all our pupils. Our school has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We recognise the benefits of early identification – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long term outcomes for the child or young person.

All our pupils will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers at our school will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty will be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons will be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. By planning in this way, pupils with SEND will be supported to access the School's broad and balanced curriculum and to make progress from their individual starting points. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, will be a core part of our school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. School leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCO, will identify any patterns in the identification of SEN, both within our school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching. The identification of SEN will be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.

Interpretation

As part of its commitments under articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the UK Government is committed to inclusive education and the progressive removal of barriers to learning and participation. The Children and Families Act 2014 secures a general presumption of mainstream education in relevant statutory decision-making and the Equality Act 2010 provides protection from unlawful disability discrimination. Old Vicarage School has regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years where its provisions apply directly and otherwise draws on it as a framework for good practice, recognising that the statutory duties applying to maintained schools, academies and section 41 approved independent schools do not all apply to this School.

Definition of special educational needs

Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean that the child or young person has SEND and should not automatically lead to a person being registered as having SEND. Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEND. Persistent, disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEND. (Code of Practice Jan 2015)

SEN identification

The four broad areas of need commonly used to support identification and planning are:

1. Communication and Interaction

This area covers difficulties in understanding and using language, as well as challenges with social communication and interaction. Examples include difficulties with:

Social communication: Understanding social cues and forming relationships.

Speech and language: Language delay, or difficulty understanding and using language effectively.

Autism (ASD): Although not the only condition in this category, autism often involves challenges with communication and interaction.

2. Cognition and Learning

This area addresses challenges with learning and memory. Examples include difficulties with:

General learning difficulty: Slower progress in all areas of learning.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD): Like dyslexia, dyscalculia, or dyspraxia, which affect specific skills.

Memory skills: Difficulty retaining and recalling information.

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

This area focuses on challenges that can affect a child's well-being and ability to manage their emotions and behaviour. Examples include:

Anxiety: Mental health conditions that can impact a child's ability to learn and participate in school.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): A condition characterised by inattentiveness, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness.

Behaviour alone does not constitute a separate category of SEN and should prompt consideration of any underlying communication, learning, physical, mental-health, safeguarding or other needs.

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This category covers conditions that affect a child's physical health or their ability to use their senses. Examples include: Sensory impairments: Visual or hearing impairments that make it difficult to access information.

Physical disabilities: Conditions like cerebral palsy that affect mobility and physical access.

Multi-sensory impairments (MSI): When a child has more than one sensory impairment.

Under section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014, children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Pupils have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools; OR
- are under compulsory school age and are likely to fall within the definition above when of compulsory school age (or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them).

Children do not have a learning difficulty or disability, within the legal definition, solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

SEND and disability are not interchangeable. A pupil may be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 without having SEN, and a pupil may have SEN without meeting the statutory definition of disability. The School will consider its SEND and Equality Act duties separately and together as appropriate.

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. Pupils who might require additional support include:

- pupils with specific learning differences e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia;
- pupils whose neurodevelopmental, communication, interaction, attention, learning, sensory or social, emotional and mental-health needs require additional or different provision; needs will be assessed individually rather than inferred solely from a diagnosis;
- pupils with hearing and/or visual impairment
- pupils with specific physical and medical conditions

Our school regularly reviews and evaluates the quality and breadth of the support we can offer or can access for children with SEN or disabilities. We also consider our duties, as they apply to us as an independent school, under The Equality Act 2010. We give careful consideration in advance to what disabled children and young people we can accommodate in our independent school. The SENCO and Head of School report on SEND provision, progress, emerging needs, reasonable adjustments and resourcing to the Proprietor through the School's established academic and pastoral oversight arrangements. The Proprietor retains overall responsibility for ensuring that the Independent School Standards and the School's Equality Act duties are met. School leaders will regularly review how expertise and resources used to address SEN can be used to build the quality of whole-school provision as part of their approach to school improvement.

Equality Act 2010

Our school has duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards disabled pupils and prospective pupils. We will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services where reasonable, to prevent disabled pupils being put at a substantial disadvantage. We give prior thought to what disabled pupils may require and what adjustments might need to be made. The School must not unlawfully discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or prospective pupil in relation to admission or the education, benefits, facilities and services it provides.

In accordance with Schedule 10 to the Equality Act 2010, the School maintains and implements a written Accessibility Plan which is kept under review. The Plan addresses increasing disabled pupils' participation in the curriculum, improving the physical environment so that disabled pupils can take greater advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services, and improving the delivery of information to disabled pupils in accessible forms.

Aims and Objectives

Old Vicarage Schools' Special Educational Needs policy provides a framework for the provision of teaching and support for pupils with learning difficulties. The framework refers to entitlement, access and partnership. The School will assess each pupil's needs individually and will provide appropriate support and make reasonable adjustments in accordance with its legal obligations. Where requested provision cannot reasonably be delivered by the School, this will be discussed promptly with parents and, where applicable, the local authority or relevant professionals. No decision will be based simply on the existence of SEND or disability, and any decision concerning reasonable adjustments will take account of the individual circumstances and the Equality Act 2010. Where a concern has been raised, any special needs or disabilities will be identified at the earliest possible opportunity. The assessment process will involve partnership with all those concerned with the pupil, including parents/carers, teachers and other professionals. The pupil's views will also be sought. The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each pupil;
- to ensure that the special educational needs of pupils are identified, assessed and provided for;
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process;
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for pupil's special educational needs;
- to enable all pupils to have full access to all elements of the school curriculum; • to ensure that parents are able to play their part in supporting their pupil's education; • to ensure that our pupils have a voice in this process.

In order to meet these aims, our objectives are:

- to ensure pupils with learning needs are identified as early as possible;
- to assess the pupil to identify specific areas of difficulty;
- to ensure all peripatetic staff are aware of the pupil's needs and are able to meet those needs within the school setting;
- to ensure pupils' records include information relating to their individual needs, interventions and outcomes;
- to assist staff in modifying curriculum to meet the pupil's needs within the classroom and provide training programmes when required;
- to ensure that no pupil with learning needs or disability is discriminated against on the basis of his/her disability; • to work in partnership with parents, guardians and the pupil themselves in providing appropriate support and advice.

In all cases, early identification and intervention can significantly reduce the need for more costly interventions at a later stage. Special educational provision will be matched to the child's identified SEN. Children's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs.

Admission Arrangements

Pupils entering the school from Years 1 - 6 will normally have an English and Maths assessment and a generalised discussion with either the Head of School or a member of staff. If a pupil has already been identified as having learning needs, relevant reports should be brought to the family interview. If necessary the SENCO will meet the pupil and talk to parents. Admission decisions are made by the Head of School in accordance with the School's Admissions Policy and the Equality Act 2010. SEND or disability will not of itself be a reason to refuse admission. Before deciding whether the School can meet an applicant's needs, the School will consider relevant information, consult parents and, where appropriate, professionals, and consider any reasonable adjustments that could remove or reduce disadvantage.

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)

Although Old Vicarage School is not subject to the statutory maintained-school SENCO appointment duty, the Proprietor has appointed a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

(SENCo). The current SENCo is Mrs Kerry Wise. It is the responsibility of the SENCo to co-ordinate the operation of the Special Educational Needs Policy. The SENCO in our school, in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team, has an important role to play in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in our school. The SENCO, who is a member of the Senior Leadership Team, has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans. The SENCO provides professional guidance to

colleagues and will work closely with staff, parents and other agencies. The SENCO will be aware of the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.

The key responsibilities of the SENCO will include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support advising on the deployment of the school's resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with previous and next education providers to support a planned transition and, where appropriate, ensuring relevant SEND information, agreed strategies and records are transferred securely and promptly in accordance with data-protection and safeguarding requirements
- working with the Proprietors to ensure that the school continues to meet its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date

The school will ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This will include providing the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within a school.

The role of the SENCO in Early Years provision

Our school SENCO has whole school responsibilities inclusive of the early years foundation stage (EYFS) and the role involves:

- ensuring all practitioners in our school understand their responsibilities to children with SEN and our school's approach to identifying and meeting SEN
- advising and supporting colleagues
- ensuring parents are closely involved throughout and that their insights inform action taken by our school, and
- liaising with professionals or agencies beyond the school

Learning Support Assistants (LSA)

As part of inclusion we believe that pupils should receive assistance with their peers within their classrooms, therefore as much as possible the majority of our pupils receive assistance during normal lesson times within their normal classroom setting in order that they can access the curriculum along with the rest of their class.

The role of the SEN Coordinator will involve:

- overseeing the records for all pupils with special educational needs;
- maintaining the school's SEND and EAL lists;
- liaising with and advising fellow staff;
- liaising with parents of pupils with special educational needs;
- working with external agencies, professionals and specialist tutors as appropriate;
- monitoring Multi Element Plans (MEPs), or other individual support plans used by the School, as and when required;
- supporting staff in developing strategies to meet effectively the learning needs of all pupils at Old Vicarage School.

The Graduated Approach to responding to Special needs

In practical situations of our school we do what is necessary to enable children and young people to develop, learn, participate and achieve the best possible outcomes. Our school recognises emerging difficulties arising with young people and responds promptly. We understand parents know their children best and we respond when parents express concerns about their child's development. We listen to and address any concerns raised by children themselves.

The model of action and intervention in our school has a graduated approach to help children who have Special Educational Needs. Our approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. The School adopts the

graduated 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' approach as an effective framework for identifying, meeting and reviewing pupils' needs, drawing on the SEND Code of Practice where applicable and as good practice for the School.

Where we identify a child as having SEN in our school, we take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. The support provided takes the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and what support the pupil requires to make good progress and secure good outcomes. This 4 part cycle is known as 'Assess, plan, do, review'.

Assess

In identifying a child as needing SEN support the class teacher, working with key members of staff (therapists, intervention specialists, Head of School, and other external professionals) will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information from our school's core approach to pupil progress, attainment, and behaviour. It will also draw on other subject teachers' assessments where relevant, the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experience of parents, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. Our school will take seriously any concerns raised by a parent. These will be recorded and compared to the school's own assessment and information on how the pupil is developing. This assessment will be reviewed regularly. This will help ensure that our support and intervention are tailored to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed. For some types of SEN, the way in which a pupil responds to an intervention can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need. In some case professionals from outside the school (such as health or social care) may already be involved with the child. These professionals should liaise with the school to help inform the assessments. Where professionals are not already working with school staff the SENCO should contact them if the parents agree. The School will not require a formal diagnosis before putting appropriate support or reasonable adjustments in place where the evidence available demonstrates that a pupil has an identified need or is experiencing a substantial disadvantage. A diagnosis may inform assessment but does not by itself determine whether a pupil has SEN or is disabled.

Plan

When our school has decided to provide a pupil with further SEN support (over and above what has already been put in place at the time of joining Old Vicarage School), we will then formally notify parents, although parents will often have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above. Key members of staff will agree in consultation with the parent the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, and this will be regularly reviewed. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. The support and intervention provided will be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, and will be provided by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge. Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and, where appropriate, home strategies will be included to reinforce or contribute to progress.

Do

The class teacher will remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they will still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENCO will support the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed. The impact and quality of the support and interventions will be evaluated, along with the views of the parents. This will feed back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, will revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil.

Children with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Where a child who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan needs joins our school, we will always consult with parents and, where appropriate, the Local Authority to ensure that the required curriculum is provided for as set out in the Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, including the full National Curriculum if this is specified. We will also co-operate with the Local Authority to ensure that relevant reviews, including the annual review, are carried out as required by regulation and best practice. The school will make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of children with an Education Health and Care Plan. Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the School will work with the parents and the local authority to establish responsibility

for commissioning and funding the provision specified in the plan. Where the local authority is under a duty to secure provision specified in the EHC plan, the School will not treat that provision as an additional charge payable by parents. Where parents have made their own private arrangements, or request services additional to those commissioned or required under the EHC plan, any charges will be explained and agreed in advance.

We have arrangements in place to support children with SEN or disabilities. We have developed a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We recognise the benefits of early identification, identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children. We have a focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning, and therefore special educational provision in our school is underpinned by high quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised, and is compromised by anything less. We always aim to know precisely where children with SEN are in their learning and development. We:

- ensure decisions are informed by the insights of parents and those of children themselves;
- have high ambitions and set stretching targets for them;
- track their progress towards these goals;
- keep under review the additional or different provision that is made for them;
- promote positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development, and
- ensure that the approaches used are based on the best possible evidence and are having the required impact on progress.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Our school will regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all of our pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and school SENCO will consider all of the information gathered from within our school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This will include high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials. For higher levels of need, our school will have arrangements in place to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

This information gathering will include an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These early discussions with parents will be structured in such a way that they develop a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents' concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the child and the next steps. Consideration of whether special educational provision is required will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents. This will then help determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting our school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required. However where support is provided, a clear date for reviewing progress will be set and the parent, pupil and teaching staff will each be clear about how they will help the pupil attain the expected outcomes. The overriding purpose of this early action is to help the pupil achieve the identified outcomes and remove any barriers to learning. Where it is decided that a pupil does have SEN, the decision will be recorded in our school records and the pupil's parents must be formally informed that special educational provision is being made

Use of data and record keeping

Our school has developed its own approach to record keeping in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 and the School's data-protection, privacy and retention arrangements. The provision made for pupils with SEN will be recorded accurately and kept up to date. Our school will particularly record details of additional or different provision made under SEN support. This will form part of regular discussions with parents about the child's progress, expected outcomes from the support and planned next steps. They will ensure that they have accurate information to evidence the SEN support that has been provided over the pupil's time in the school, as well as its impact. A local authority that is considering or is carrying out an assessment of the pupil's needs will wish to review such information. We use our information system to monitor the progress and development of all pupils. Details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists will be recorded as part of this overall approach. The School will provide parents with appropriate information about their child's needs, progress and provision, subject to applicable data-protection, confidentiality, safeguarding and third-party information requirements.

Improving outcomes: high aspirations and expectations for children and young people with SEN in our school All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they can:

- achieve their best;

- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

In accordance with the Independent School Standards, the Equality Act 2010, the EYFS framework where applicable, and the School's own commitment to inclusive practice, Old Vicarage School will:

- identify and respond promptly to pupils' individual needs and provide appropriate additional or different support where the School has identified that this is required;
- enable pupils with SEND to participate in School life alongside their peers so far as reasonably possible;
- maintain a designated School SENCO to co-ordinate SEND provision;
- inform and involve parents when additional SEND provision is being made;
- maintain clear information for parents about the School's SEND provision, admission arrangements for disabled pupils, reasonable adjustments, accessibility arrangements and Accessibility Plan.

Identification of Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

The identification of SEN will be built into the overall approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, our school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people. Children with SEND may face additional safeguarding vulnerabilities and barriers to recognising or reporting abuse. Staff must remain alert to the possibility that indicators such as behaviour, mood or injury may be wrongly attributed to a child's SEND or disability; that communication needs may create barriers to disclosure; and that pupils with SEND may be disproportionately affected by bullying, child-on-child abuse and online harm. Safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately in accordance with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and must never be treated solely as a SEND or behaviour matter.

The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN, and the progress made by pupils, will be a core part of our school's performance management arrangements and its approach to professional development for all teaching and support staff. School leaders and teaching staff, including the SENCO, will identify any patterns in the identification of SEN, both within our school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching. All our pupils will have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers at our school will use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty will be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons will be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. By planning in this way, pupils with SEND will be supported to access the School's broad and balanced curriculum and to make progress from their individual starting points. Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, our school will take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support will take the form of a four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.

The identification of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities can be:

- on entry when specific needs are identified and recorded as part of the entrance/transition process;
- by staff recognition of a pupil whom they perceive as having difficulties or specific needs in their particular curriculum area;
- by staff referring a pupil who is experiencing emotional/behavioural problems;
- through discussion with external professionals such as. doctors, counsellors, therapists and also
- through concern expressed by parents.

Our school has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEN. We recognise the benefits of early identification – identifying need at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child or young person. Once a pupil's difficulties have been identified appropriate provision is made. At this stage the pupil is placed on the SEND register and staff are aware of any adaptations including differentiation that needs to take place in the classroom. Within the graduated approach a programme of intervention and support will be implemented. If this does not enable the child to make satisfactory progress, the SENCO seeks advice from external agencies, which may include an educational psychologist report. Teachers are responsible for tracking each pupil's progress in Literacy and/or Numeracy throughout their time at Old Vicarage School. A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely

provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. Making higher quality teaching normally available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such support. Such improvements in whole-class provision tend to be more cost effective and sustainable.

Our school will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. At the same time, we will consider evidence that a pupil may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments may need to be made for them. Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team, will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These assessments will seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. 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. The first response to such progress will be high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. Where progress continues to be less than expected the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, will assess whether the child has SEN. While informally gathering evidence (including the views of the pupil and their parents) our school will not delay in putting in place extra teaching or other rigorous interventions designed to secure better progress, where required. The pupil's response to such support can help identify their particular needs. For some children, SEN can be easily identified at an early age. However, for other children and young people difficulties become evident only as they develop. All those who work with children and young people will be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best we place great importance when parents express concerns about their child's development. Additionally we will also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves.

Our school will always be alert to other events that can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to children having SEN but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe. Our school will ensure that we make appropriate provision for a child's short-term needs in order to prevent problems escalating. Where there are long-lasting difficulties our school shall consider whether the child might have SEN. Whilst slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and will not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN, they may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. Equally, our school will not assume that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Our school will look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. However difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not classed as SEN. When reviewing and managing special educational provision the broad areas of need and support our school will review how well-equipped we are to provide support across these areas. This gives an overview of the range of needs that will be planned for. The purpose of identification is to work out what action we will need to take, and crucially not to fit a pupil into a category. In practice we recognise individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time. For instance speech, language and communication needs can also be a feature of a number of other areas of SEN, and children and young people with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may have needs across all areas, including particular sensory requirements. A detailed assessment of need will ensure that the full range of an individual's needs is identified, not simply the primary need. The support provided to an individual will always be based on a full understanding of their particular strengths and needs and seek to address them all using well-evidenced interventions targeted at their areas of difficulty and where necessary specialist equipment or software.

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and

Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others. Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Involving Specialists

Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's area of need, we will consider to begin involving specialists, including those secured by our school itself or from outside agencies. Our school may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. We will always involve a specialist where a pupil continues to make little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age despite evidence-based SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff. The pupil's parents will always be involved and consulted in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed will be recorded and shared with the parents and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEN support. Where our assessments have indicated that support from specialist services is required, it is important that children and young people receive it as quickly as possible. Joint commissioning arrangements will seek to ensure that there are sufficient services to meet the likely need in an area.

Inclusion and SEND in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

At Old Vicarage School EYFS we believe that all our children matter. All the children in our EYFS stage are entitled to an education that enables them to:

- achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, and
- become confident young children with a growing ability to communicate their own views and ready to make the transition into compulsory education.

At Old Vicarage School we are aware that some children may not progress at the expected rate. The School's early years provision complies with the current Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework for group and school-based providers, dated July 2026 and effective from 1 September 2026. The EYFS applies to the School's early years provision and includes children with SEND. The School has arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND, promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice, work closely with parents and carers, and respond promptly where a child's progress, development or wellbeing gives cause for concern. Current non-statutory curriculum guidance, including Development Matters where used by the School, may support professional judgement but does not replace the statutory EYFS requirements.

As set out in the EYFS framework we take steps to ensure that children with medical conditions get the support required to meet their needs.

As an early years provider we have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and to promote equality of opportunity for children in our care. These arrangements form part of our overall approach to monitoring children's learning, development and wellbeing, and parents are involved closely throughout.

Assessment in the EYFS is based principally on practitioners' professional knowledge of each child through ongoing assessment and the statutory assessment arrangements in the current EYFS framework. Assessment will be proportionate and will be used to identify strengths, emerging needs, barriers to learning and appropriate next steps. Practitioners consider children's development across the seven areas of learning:

- communication and language
- physical development
- personal, social and emotional development
- literacy
- mathematics
- understanding of the world
- expressive arts and design

Assessment at the end of the EYFS – the EYFS profile

The School will complete the statutory EYFS assessment requirements applicable to its provision, including the EYFS Profile at the end of the Reception year, and will use assessment information to support transition, future learning and the identification

of any additional support required. In addition to statutory assessments, the School monitors and reviews the progress and development of children throughout the early years.

We identify those children who do not meet these developmental milestones through a range of methods, including:

- Information from parents
- Information/records from Playgroups/Nurseries/Pre-Schools
- Information from outside agencies
- On-going teacher observations
- Foundation Stage Profile
- Termly school reports

Those children who may need additional help to meet the Early Learning Goals are largely supported in the EYFS through in-class strategies which are implemented by the class teacher. These may include:

- Planning opportunities that build upon and extend children's knowledge, experience and interests, and develop their self-esteem and confidence;
- Using a wide range of teaching strategies based on children's learning needs;
- Providing extra time/ 1:1 activities with the class teacher or teaching assistant which focus on key areas for development.
- Providing a wide range of opportunities to motivate and support children and to help them to learn effectively;
- Providing a safe and supportive learning environment in which the contribution of all children is valued;
- Using resources and activities which meet as many of the seven areas of learning as possible: this allows children with different learning styles to engage to their fullest potential;
- Planning challenging activities for children whose ability and understanding are in advance of their language and communication skills;
- Monitoring children's progress and taking action to provide support as necessary. This involves speech therapy for some of our children.

Practitioners **will** maintain a record of children under their care as required under the EYFS framework. Such records about their children **will** be available to parents and they **shall** include how our school supports children with SEN and disabilities. Where, despite our early years foundation stage having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child, the child has not made expected progress, our school will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

Multi Element Plans

A Multi Element Plan (MEP) is the School's individual planning and review document for pupils receiving additional or different support; it is a School procedure rather than a statutory document. Each term a Multi Element Plan showing the provision of support currently available for those identified as requiring additional support is drawn up. Interventions are written up for any additional provision that takes place. Teachers monitor the pupil's progress and note any improvements that can be made and whether the provision should continue. Children have personal targets they are working towards. These are written and reviewed termly (or more regularly if required) in collaboration with pupils and parents. Parents should expect to be informed of the targets set for their child. Targets are discussed with the child, who is encouraged to participate in decision-making, at an appropriate level, about future options. Parents also participate in decision-making at an appropriate level. All staff who are regularly involved with the child are made aware of the child's targets. We aim for targets to be S.M.A.R.T.E.R.:

1. Specific
2. Measurable
3. Achievable
4. Relevant
5. Time bound
6. Evaluated and
7. Reviewed.

Parents will be encouraged to contribute their own ideas about how their child's needs could be met and what helps the child to learn and will be expected to share with the School success when targets are met at home. Parents should try to attend any meeting called by the School to review the targets, with at least one review each year where possible coinciding with a parents' evening. Generally, such targets focus on three or four key points and information on how these targets will be worked on and with whom. The targets are distributed to the teachers involved in the pupil's learning and parents of the pupil as soon as they

are written and have been agreed by all parties. Care will be taken to avoid the four most common weaknesses in setting targets which are:

- imprecise terminology (with frequent use of phrases such as 'improved reading', 'increased confidence', 'improved self-esteem');
- failure to indicate which teachers and subjects would be involved;
- lack of pupil involvement;
- failure to link them with other areas of assessment and recording procedures in the school.

Our experience is that the five most frequent strengths of specific focused targets are:

- based on sound knowledge of the pupil;
- taking account of pupil's strengths and interests;
- stating realistic time scales;
- linked to resources in school;
- involving parents at some stage (either in their setting and/or review).

MEP's are an efficient way of showing all the provision that the school makes which is additional to and different from that which is offered through our school's curriculum. The use of MEP's help our SENCOs to maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with pupils and provide a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention. Provision management can be used strategically to develop special educational provision to match the assessed needs of pupils across the school, and to evaluate the impact of that provision on pupil progress. Used in this way MEP's can also contribute to school improvement by identifying particular patterns of need and potential areas of development for teaching staff. It can help our school to develop the use of interventions that are effective and to remove those that are less so. It can support us to improve our core offer for all pupils as the most effective approaches are adopted more widely across the school.

Timetabling

The amount and type of support offered to a pupil is dependent on need. Old Vicarage School believes that pupils will not be withdrawn from lessons unless it is necessary to do so. Old Vicarage School believes that pupils with additional needs should spend as much time as possible in the classroom with the most effective teachers and that removal from class should be avoided wherever possible. We believe that all subjects are important to the pupil's development and that every pupil is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum. Therefore, timetabled lessons should not be sacrificed for support unless entirely necessary. When a pupil needs to be withdrawn for learning support, every effort is made to ensure that a pupil does not miss core curriculum subjects. Their individual strengths are also taken into account in addition to the advice of staff members and parental requests. Some pupils are withdrawn from a second language in order to ensure extra support is given for English and Maths as appropriate. Some support lessons are also delivered at the same time as the timetabled subject following the same lesson objectives but in a smaller group with a smaller range of abilities.

Able Pupils

Occasionally a pupil will stand out from their peers as having exceptional abilities. Exceptional ability does not in itself constitute SEN. The School nevertheless recognises that able pupils may require curriculum adaptation, extension or additional challenge, which will normally be provided through appropriate teaching and enrichment.

Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

Old Vicarage School supports pupils with social, emotional and mental-health needs through high-quality teaching, pastoral support and, where appropriate, targeted or specialist provision, including access to the school counsellor. Provision is determined according to individual need.

Support for all pupils in Old Vicarage School

Any pupil is welcome to visit the Learning Support room whether or not they receive special provision. They are welcome to discuss any learning difficulties they may have with the SENCO.

Access to the Curriculum

All pupils have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable them to:

- understand the relevance and purpose of learning activities;
- experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring feelings of success and achievement.

Teachers use a range of strategies to meet pupil's special educational needs. Lessons have clear learning objectives; we differentiate work appropriately, and we use assessment to inform the next stage of learning.

MEP's which employ a small-steps approach, feature significantly in the provision that we make in the school. By breaking down the existing levels of attainment into finely graded steps and targets, we ensure that pupils experience success. We support pupils in a manner that acknowledges their entitlement to share the same learning experiences that their peers enjoy. We regularly give the pupils opportunity to work in small groups or in a one-to-one situation within the classroom.

Partnership with parents

Old Vicarage School works closely with parents in the support of those pupils with special educational needs. We encourage an active partnership through an on-going dialogue with parents. The Home-School Agreement is central to this. Parents have much to contribute to our support for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have meetings to share the progress of special needs pupils with their parents. We inform the parents of any intervention, and we share the process of decision-making by providing clear information relating to the education of pupils with special educational needs. Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, we will talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and our school. We will meet parents at least three times each year.

These discussions can build confidence in the actions being taken by the school, but they can also strengthen the impact of SEN support by increasing parental engagement in the approaches and teaching strategies that are being used. Finally, they can provide essential information on the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs. These discussions will be led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the pupil who is aware of their needs and attainment. This will usually be the class teacher or form tutor, supported by the school SENCO. It will provide an opportunity for the parent to share their concerns and, together with the teacher, agree their aspirations for the pupil. Conducting these discussions effectively involves a considerable amount of skill. As with other aspects of good teaching for pupils with SEN, our school will ensure that teaching staff are supported to manage these conversations as part of professional development.

These discussions will need to allow sufficient time to explore the parents' views and to plan effectively. Meetings will, wherever possible, be aligned with the normal cycle of discussions with parents of all pupils. They will, however, be longer than most parent-teacher meetings. The views of the pupil will be included in these discussions. This could be through involving the pupil in all or part of the discussion itself, or gathering their views as part of the preparation. A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion will be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff. This record will be given to the pupil's parents. The school's management information system will be updated as appropriate.

Pupil participation

In our school we encourage pupils to take responsibility and to make decisions. This is part of the culture of our school and relates to pupils of all ages. Pupils are involved at an appropriate level in setting targets in their MEP's and in the termly MEP review meetings. Pupils are encouraged to make judgements about their own performance against their MEP targets. We recognise success here as we do in any other aspect of school life.

Monitoring and evaluation

The SENCO supports teachers, where necessary, in drawing up MEPs for pupils. The SENCO holds meetings to review the work of the school in this area. The Head of School and SENCO monitor the impact, rather than merely the quantity, of additional provision. Monitoring includes individual progress and outcomes, participation, attendance where relevant, pupil and parent views, the effectiveness of interventions and reasonable adjustments, patterns of need, and staff training requirements. Findings inform School improvement and are reported periodically to the Proprietor. This policy is reviewed formally by the Proprietor at least annually and earlier where required by changes in legislation, guidance or School practice.

Staffing and resources

A range of teaching resources are used to enhance learning and memory. These include ICT facilities. Teachers are supported by the Teaching Assistant (TA) and the SENCO. The School provides staff with appropriate information, guidance and professional development to enable them to identify emerging needs, understand individual pupils' agreed strategies and reasonable adjustments, adapt teaching effectively and recognise when specialist advice is required.

Complaints

Parents who have concerns about SEND provision should initially raise these with the pupil's class teacher and/or SENCO and may also raise them with the Head of School. Formal complaints will be handled under the School's Complaints Policy. Nothing

in the School's complaints procedure removes any statutory right to bring a disability-discrimination claim to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) where the Tribunal has jurisdiction. Parents may also seek independent SEND advice or contact the relevant local authority regarding an EHC needs assessment or EHC plan.

Equality Act 2010, Disability and Accessibility

The whole raison d'être of Old Vicarage School is, whenever possible, to enable every pupil to realise their potential. The School welcomes applications from disabled pupils and pupils with SEND. Disability and SEN are distinct legal concepts and a disabled pupil may or may not have SEN. Admission and continued provision will be considered individually, including any reasonable adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant educational, health or safeguarding needs. The School keeps accessibility under review and refers to its Accessibility Plan and Equality Policy for further detail.