



Merley First School

SEN and Disability Policy



Mission

Merley First School is a happy, safe, caring environment, where children and adults are nurtured and challenged to grow and flourish. Our strong, community school is built upon mutual respect and caring relationships. We are a place where learners are encouraged to be curious, resilient and passionate.

At Merley we are all: **Growing Together to Build Our Future**

1. Aims

- At Merley First School we believe that all pupils should make the best possible progress. Where there are barriers to learning, we aim to remove them through a variety of strategies and interventions.
- In consultation with staff, parents/carers and outside agencies we aim to identify all pupils with SEND as quickly as possible so that we can ensure appropriate provision.
- We seek to create an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance, and respect of achievements and sensitivity to individual needs, in which all pupils can thrive.
- Pupils with SEND will generally be taught alongside their peers in mainstream lessons, with appropriate differentiation, ways-in and support to enable pupils to access the curriculum. There may be occasions when it will be more beneficial to withdraw the pupil for additional support but every effort will be made to offer access to the whole curriculum.
- At Merley First School we do our best to ensure that pupils with SEND take part in and contribute fully to school life wherever practically possible.
- We work in partnership with parents and carers to support pupils with SEND and ensure that pupils and their parents and carers are involved in the decisions that affect their education.
- We work to promote effective partnerships with outside agencies, pre-schools and middle schools.

The success of the school's SEND policy will be judged against the aims set out above. The SEND policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCo/Inclusion team who will make recommendations for change to the Head Teacher and the Local School Committee as required.

2. Compliance

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

- Equalities Act 2010: Advice for schools (DfE May 2014)
- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 (January 2015)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
- The Children and Families Act (2014)

The Equalities Act 2010 identifies that some pupils with disabilities may have learning difficulties that call for special educational provision. However, not all children classed as disabled will require this provision. A child with asthma or diabetes for example, may not have special educational needs, but may still have rights under the Equalities Act. The Children and Families Act 2014 states that schools and academies are to make arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions. Individual healthcare plans will normally specify the type and level of support required to meet

the medical needs of such pupils. Where children also have SEND, their provision and support will be planned and delivered in a coordinated way with the healthcare plan.

3. Definitions

Pupils have special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities if they have a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. This means that they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age or that they have a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools (SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25, January 2015). Not all pupils with disabilities have SEN and not all pupils with SEND meet the definition of disability, but this policy covers all of these pupils.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Academy Committee has due regard to the SEND Code of Practice, the Children and Families Act (2014) and the Equality Act (2010) when exercising its duties. These will include:

- Ensuring that Merley First School's arrangements are published on supporting disability and medical conditions, equality and school and SEN information pertinent to the SEND policy
- Ensuring that the necessary provision for any pupil identified as having special educational needs is secured.
- Ensuring that all teachers are aware of the importance of providing for children with SEND
- Ensuring that Parents/Carers are included in the decisions made in conjunction with the school where SEND provision is to be made for their child
- Identifying an AC member to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special education needs.

The identified LSC member at Merley First School is Mr Ieuan Weir ensures that all Committee Members are aware of the school's provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel.

The Head Teacher has responsibility for day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including the provision for children with SEND. The Head teacher keeps the Local School Committee fully informed and works closely with the SENCo. The Head Teacher is Mrs Rebecca Baldwin who is also the DDSL for the school. The Head Teacher and Local School Committee have delegated the responsibility for the day to day implementation of the policy to the Inclusion Team.

The SENCo takes a leading role in the day to day management of children with special educational needs and responsibilities include:

- Managing the day- to-day operation of this policy
- Working in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice
- Co-ordinating the support and provision for children's special educational needs
- Supporting and advising colleagues
- Record keeping of all of the children with special educational needs
- Creating links with Parents/Carers
- Creating links with external agencies and other support agencies
- Monitoring and evaluating the support and provision provided for the special educational needs of the children
- Reporting findings and evaluations to LSC Members
- Managing a range of resources, both human and material, to enable appropriate provisions to be made for children with special educational needs
- Contributing to the professional development of staff

At Merley First School;

Miss Sophie Leftwich is the named SENCo and Senior Mental Health Lead

Mrs Carolyn Waldron is the Inclusion Lead, DSL and is the Pupil Premium Lead in the school

Mrs Chloe Butler is the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead

Teaching Assistants (TAs) work to support pupils with SEN and their overall line management is the responsibility of the SLT and the SENCo. Pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will have an allocation of funding, which is used under the guidance of the SENCo, SLT and class teacher. Support may be provided both on an individual basis and/or part of a small group, following local authority guidance. Class teachers will work closely with all the teaching and support staff in their year group to ensure a consistent approach to children with special needs

5. SEND at Merley First School

The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 (January 2015) identifies SEN under four broad areas of need (sections 6.28 to 6.35):

1. Communication and Interaction (CI)
2. Cognition and learning (CL)
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)
4. Sensory and/or physical needs (S&PN)

Pupils may have needs in more than one category of need and we aim to ensure that plans match individual learning requirements.

Merley First School works within the statutory guidance, Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (DfE December 2015). We comply with the duties specified under the Equality Act 2010. We recognise that provisions relating to disability must be treated favourably and that Merley First School is expected to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate pupils who are disabled or have medical conditions.

5.1 Identification

At Merley First School we are committed to early identification of SEN and adopt a graduated response in line with the Code of Practice, 2015. If a concern is raised (by the class teacher/TA, child's parent or other adult), a range of evidence is collected through classroom assessment and monitoring processes and is used to assess gaps in learning. If the evidence suggests that a pupil is not making expected progress, the class teacher will decide on an appropriate level of support and/or intervention and will monitor its impact. Any use of auxiliary aids during the school day, such as ear defenders, fiddle toys or wobble cushions, will need to be agreed with the school. In most instances, these will be provided by the school so that the impact of this provision can be measured accurately.

If difficulties persist, the class teacher may adjust the support/intervention and seek advice from the SENCo/Inclusion Team. If a child requires any additional provision, a physical resource or an adult intervention, this will be arranged and provided by the school. A Record of Concern will be completed and the pupil will be added to the Monitoring Register. After a period of monitoring, the SENCo/Inclusion Team will decide if the child needs to be added to the SEND Register and what further assessments or referrals may be appropriate. At all stages, parents are kept fully informed.

See MFS SEND Support Managing Concerns flowchart

Where, despite the school 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, the school and the parents/carers may

consider requesting an Educational Health Care Plan. To inform the final decision regarding the granting of an EHCP, the local authority will expect to see evidence of the action taken by the school as part of the graduated response.

Children with an EHCP have an individualised EHCP Action Plan (rather than a SEND PP) which details the long term outcomes from the plan and the smaller steps towards meeting them. These are working documents which are continually reviewed with a formal review at least termly.

5.2 Our approach to teaching pupils with SEND

The majority of pupils with SEND will have their needs met at the school support level. Our teachers are responsible and accountable for the development and progress of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from TAs or other specialist staff including outside agencies. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have learning needs and this is known as a graduated response. We regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement.

When a pupil is identified as having SEN and is added to the SEND Register, Merley First School will provide appropriate support and/or intervention, and a SEND Provision Plan (SEND PP) will be written. The 'plan, do and review' approach will be followed. The SEND PP includes an outline of the child's strengths and difficulties and any external agency involvement, the identified area(s) of need, the strategies and interventions in place and outcomes. 'Ways-in' will also be recorded and these outline the specific things which help the pupil to learn. Progress will be evaluated and recorded on the plan termly and levels of support and intervention adjusted accordingly.

At MFS we also recognise that needs are sometimes affected by other factors, which are not educational but nevertheless impact on learning. These are identified as far as possible and addressed appropriately using additional processes and strategies which may include referring the child to our Pastoral Support Worker for emotional/well-being support. Below are some examples of other influences upon progress:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Behaviour where there is no underlying SEN
- Bereavement and family issues
- Disability where there is no impact on progress and attainment
- English as an additional language
- Health and welfare
- Looked after and previously looked-after children
- Pupil premium pupils
- Service children

5.3 Expertise and staff training

At MFS we are committed to ongoing training and development of all staff. Training needs are identified through a process of analysis of the needs of both staff and pupils as and when required and suitable opportunities are provided. The SENCo/Inclusion team will provide information on specific needs and training opportunities for new staff.

The SENCo/Inclusion team will attend personal training through the Local Authority and Initio Learning Trust SENCo network briefings. Additional training may also be arranged to support specific medical needs and will be arranged in conjunction with medical professionals.

5.4 Consulting and involvement of pupils and parents

The school endeavours to work closely with parents and carers to support children and the families of children with special educational needs and disabilities. We encourage an active partnership through ongoing dialogue with parents. We also hold a termly Inclusion Coffee Morning to which families are invited and this provides information and support for parents of children in any inclusion group. We are also keen to develop pupil voice, particularly that of those who have SEN and/or are disadvantaged and to involve them in the decisions which affect them.

Our named LSC member takes a particular interest in special needs and is always willing to talk to parents. Alongside this, members of our Inclusion team are accessible to parents by phone, email and via face-to-face meetings where necessary. This allows an opportunity for parents and carers to discuss their concerns and for referral to or awareness of outside support or agencies to be made.

At MFS we are keen to continually develop our communication with and engagement of parents and to create opportunities for them to fully contribute to their child's education.

5.5 Assessment and review of progress

The assessment of progress and attainment of all pupils is a continuous process which is monitored through drop-ins, book scrutiny and termly data drops. PPP targets are formally reviewed termly at which time provision may be adjusted to better meet the identified needs of the child. To assess the progress of children with SEND, the school follows the Graduated Response cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review which is carried out termly and recorded on a child's PPP. Methods of assessing and reviewing children with SEND will vary according to the individual concerned but will include the following:

- Analysis of attainment and progress data by the class teacher and Inclusion team
- Inclusion team observations, diagnostic tests or advice from outside agencies and professionals
- Teacher assessments: observations, tracking progress and attainment, assessments and tests.
- Teaching Assistant records, observations, meetings with the SENCo and Inclusion Lead
- Termly review of SEND PPs which, where appropriate will include the views of the child
- Seeking parent's views and discussions at Parent Consultation meetings

5.6 Working with external agencies

At MFS, where more specialist advice or support is needed to meet individual needs, we work with external agencies to ensure the best possible provision for children. This includes health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations.

If it is identified that the child will need support from outside services, we will consult with Parents/Carers prior to any support being actioned. In most cases children will be seen in school by external agencies and support services. The school will work closely with the outside agency and Parent/Carers to agree outcomes to be achieved through the support, including a date by which progress will be reviewed.

5.7 Admission and Transition

Merley First School uses the local authority arrangement for school admissions. The agreement is mindful of national requirements supporting all pupils, including those who are disabled, in a fair and non-discriminatory way, securing admission to school.

In addition to this MFS makes appropriate reasonable adjustments to accommodate those who are disabled. Where adaptations are required to support physical or medical needs, MFS will liaise with the local authority, health services and parents to ensure that appropriate arrangements are made to meet individual needs.

Merley First School is committed to ensuring that parents have confidence in the arrangements for pupils on entry to our school, in the year to year progression and at the point of exit and transition to the next school. Staff will discuss these arrangements with parents and agree the information that should be passed onto the next phase of education so that successful intervention, support strategies and learning experiences may be continued. The SENCo and class teachers are involved with regular exchange of information through:

- Advanced planning for pupils in year 4 transitioning to middle school
- Visits to/from pre-schools and middle schools
- Correspondence, liaison and meetings with SENCos
- Meetings with pupils
- Observing pupils in class
- Arranging for preliminary visits for pupils to their new schools
- Arranging induction lessons/sessions for pupils in their new schools
- Meeting with parents
- Attending Annual Reviews of pupils with EHCPs

6. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

Where individual programmes have been produced, outcomes are recorded at appropriate intervals. External agencies have their own review process, which they share with the school and parents/ carers. The systems for observing and assessing the progress of individual pupils will provide information about areas where a pupil is not progressing satisfactorily. Under these circumstances teachers may need to consult with the SENCo to consider what else might be done. This review may lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the class. If evidence shows that current rates of progress are inadequate, consideration will then be given to alternative support and intervention. Progress is the crucial factor in determining the need for additional support. Adequate progress includes any of the following:

- Narrowing the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- Preventing the attainment gap widening
- Attainment is equivalent to that of peers starting from the same baseline, but less than the majority of peers.
- Attainment improves upon the pupil's previous rate of progress
- The pupil demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- The pupil demonstrates improved behaviour

The SENCo/Inclusion Team has responsibility for making sure that progress of children with a PPP is monitored and records are maintained and available when required.

The Inclusion team will hold regular meetings to review the work of the school in the area of special educational needs and will meet with the named Local School Committee Member once a term. The Local School Committee body will review this policy annually and consider any amendments in light of the annual reviews findings or changes to codes of practice.

7. Complaints

Any grievance or complaint should be addressed in the following order:

- Informal or formal communication with the class teacher.
- Arranged meeting with the class teacher and the SENCo.
- Arranged meeting with the Head Teacher.
- Arranged meeting with the Local School Committee Member with responsibility for SEND.
- The school will furnish the parents with a contact name and to take the matter further as necessary.

8. The SEND Local Offer for BCP Council

The BCP Council SEND Local Offer provides information on services and activities for children and young people living in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Click on the link for more information:

[The Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole SEND Local Offer - BCP Council](#)

SEND Policy Glossary

CI – Communication and Interaction

CL – Cognition and Learning

EHCP – Education, Health and Care Plan

DSL – Designated Safeguarding Lead

DDSL – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

LAC – Looked After Child

PPP - Personal Provision Plan

SEAL – Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning

SEMH – Social, Emotional and Mental Health

SEND PP – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Provision Plan

SEN – Special Educational Needs

SENCO – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability

SLT – Senior Leadership Team

S&PN – Sensory and/or Physical Needs

TA – Teaching Assistant

Document Detail					
Delegated Committee	Document Title		Next Review Date	LSC Chairman’s Signature	Target Audience
Local School Committee	SEND Policy		September 2025		All employees of Merley First School
Document History					
Date of issue	Version number	Next review date	Date shared with AC	Person responsible for change	Nature of change
March 2021	1	March 2022	25.3.21	C Waldron	First issue
September 2022	2	September 2023		C Waldron	Second issue
September 2023	3	September 2024		S Leftwich	Third Issue
September 2024	4	September 2025	25.9.2024	S Leftwich SENCo	Fourth Issue
June 2025	5	September 2025	20.05.2025	S Leftwich SENCo	Fifth Issue