



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy 2023-2026

Our Vision

We want Virginia Primary School to be a community of happy, confident, motivated lifelong learners. We want our children to be successful citizens who value themselves and each other. Therefore, we are continually striving to ensure that we nurture, challenge and enable each and every one to be the very best they can be in all areas of school life.

Rights Respecting School

We are a Rights Respecting School and this offer supports the following articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child:

- Article 12 – every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken seriously.
- Article 23 – a child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children.
- Article 28 – every child has the right to an education.
- Article 29 – goals of education. Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures and the environment.

Policy Updated: September 2023
Policy Renewal frequency: 3 Years
Policy Renewal Date: September 2026

Rationale

At Virginia School we will ensure that children with special educational needs have those needs met. We aim to meet the needs of the children within an atmosphere of encouragement, acceptance and respect for the achievement of each individual child, with high expectations of pupils.

Some children with special educational needs also have disabilities (SEND). The procedures in this policy will often be applicable to children with SEND and children identified as disabled but not SEN. However, this policy needs to be read alongside our Single Equalities Policy and Accessibility Plan for a detailed definition, approach and adjustments for children with disabilities.

We believe that children with special educational needs and/or disabilities should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education including an appropriate curriculum for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person; including those with SEND.

Policy Development

The SEND policy is reviewed annually by the Head and SENCo. The 2014 review of the SEND policy reflected the 2014 SEN Code of Practice, 0-25 guidance.

Initial drafts are put forward for consultation with the SLT and whole school team. The final draft is shared with the governors and made available to parents, both on the school website and in paper form where requested.

The school SEND information report is available to view on the school website.

Responsibility for the leadership of Inclusion and SEND Provision

The person responsible for leadership and management of the day-to-day provision of education for vulnerable children, pupils with special educational needs or disabilities at Virginia School is known as the Special Education Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENCo).

Our SENCo is Ruth Coombe.

The SENCo is supported by our Assistant Head Teacher for Inclusion and Enrichment.

Our Approach:

At Virginia School we:

- Value all pupils equally.
- Recognise that we will need to consider the individual needs of pupils when planning our curriculum.
- Recognise the importance of early identification and assessment of vulnerable children, pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- Recognise the vital role of parents/carers in the identification, assessment and response to their children's special educational needs and will make every effort to keep them fully involved in their child's education.
- Believe in the involvement of the child, and the importance of taking their views into account in decision-making about their special educational needs.
- Are committed to effective collaboration between all agencies working with a child.

Objectives of our Policy

Our SEND Policy exemplifies:

- How we identify specific individual needs and support children within the school environment.
- How parents/carers are kept informed of all the Special Needs' provision given to the children.
- How the class teacher is supported in providing suitable differentiated opportunities for individual children.
- How we monitor the progress made by each child keeping accurate assessments and records.
- How we keep up to date record of steps taken to meet the needs of individual children.
- How we provide, where necessary the support of outside agencies through contact with the SENL and with parents.

Arrangements for the Leading and Management of SEND Provision

The SENCo is responsible for the following agreed procedures for coordinating SEN:

- Establishing an individual SEND record/profile for pupils with SEND
- Maintaining and overseeing all records for pupils with SEND
- Involving parents and offering support and advice.
- Liaising with the head teacher and assistant head teacher in developing provision maps
- Liaising with teachers and learning assistants about pupils' SEN, providing advice, and support.
- Reviewing and evaluating the impact of provision.
- Advising staff on strategies for meeting pupils' SEN, identifying and providing training.
- Meeting with other members of staff and the parents/carers of pupils with SEN.
- Liaising with outside agencies when relevant.

The SENCo, teachers, learning assistants, the parents and the child should decide upon the action needed to support the child. These actions should enable the child to learn and progress to their best ability.

Admission Arrangements

- Pupils with SEND are welcomed into the school, the same as any other child.
- The school ensures a smooth transition for pupils with SEND by thoroughly planning and liaising with parents prior to admission, where possible. The LA currently has full responsibility for arranging all pupil admissions from Reception through to Year 6.
- Children who have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and wish to attend Virginia Primary will take priority; in line with the borough's regulations.
- The accessibility policy aims to remove any barriers that the building might present to any pupils, parents, staff and member of the community.

Allocation of Resources

- The head teacher, in collaboration with the Governing Body, allocates resources to manage the SEND needs within the school.
- The SENCo is responsible for ascertaining the need of specialised equipment and ensuring it is allocated to the appropriate child/classroom.
- Class teachers are responsible for ensuring the provision of differentiated resources for use during lessons.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) defines special educational needs as follows:

“A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty 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 difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age,
- 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 or mainstream-post 16 institutions.”

Identification of Need:

Identification of need is based on the four broad categories of need as stated in the 2014 Code of Practice. These include:

- Communication & Interaction.
- Cognition & Learning.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties.
- Sensory & Physical Needs.

The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take on an individual case by case basis. We as a school take a holistic approach when identify the needs of pupils. This involves considering the needs of the whole child and their family, not just their special educational need.

Identification and Review of Pupil Needs - A Graduated Approach to SEND Support.

It is our policy to strive for early identification of children with special educational needs, with the support of the child, parent and outside agencies when appropriate.

The school follows the graduated model as laid out in the 2014 Code of Practice.

Decisions to place a child on the SEND register follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle as set out in the 2014 Code of Practice.

Phase 1: In School

- Initial concerns raised by teachers or parents require teachers to complete an initial assessment of the child to help identify their specific needs.
- This then leads to children being assessed by teachers, the SENCo or maths and literacy leaders who after consultation devise a plan of additional in-house intervention programmes and in class adjustments /quality personalised teaching.
- This initial assessment, alongside the child's and parents' views are used to decide whether the child needs personalised teaching and in class adjustments, in addition to the high quality teaching that is already provided.
- This programme is reviewed termly and judgements are made on the effectiveness of interventions and in relation to the child's progress.
- Parents are informed prior to referrals to outside agencies

Phase 2: Outside Agencies

(Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist, Play Therapist, etc.)

- The school asks for assessment and advice from outside professionals. Advice, strategies and personalised intervention programmes designed for individual children are followed with clear timelines for assessment and review.
- Judgements are made on the effectiveness of interventions and child's progress by the SENCo in consultation with teaching teams and outside agents.
- Parents are informed of any outside agency assessments and programmes prior to and post intervention.

Phase 3: Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

- If it is felt that the child is still in need of further specialist support which cannot be met within phase 2, Statutory Assessment may be sought. This will involve assessments and reports being sent to the SEN panel at Tower Hamlets who will then assess what else needs to be put in place to support the child's needs.
- In a small number of cases an EHCP may be issued if a child's needs meet the criteria set by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets which were revised in April 2003.

All children identified as having SEND (either SEN Support or EHCP) are recorded on the school's SEN register.

- In line with the 2014 Code of Practice, pupils will be placed on the SEN register if they are not making adequate progress after having quality first teaching and/or in house interventions and/or in class adjustments/quality personalised teaching.
- Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from learning assistants or specialised staff.
- If the school needs to involve several agencies in the identification, assessment and monitoring of a child's needs we use the Early Help Assessment framework (EHA).
- Annual Reviews are held for all children with EHCPs, parents are invited to these are play an active role in determining their child's targets.

Managing Pupils on the SEN Register

How the process works

- Class teachers and other members of staff can refer a child whose progress is causing concern to the SENCo at any time.
- Parents who are concerned about their child's progress may request SENCo involvement via the class teacher or by approaching the SENCo directly.
- Termly, the SENCo meets with the teachers to identify the vulnerable children, and those with SEN, decide or review what stage they should be placed at on the SEN list, and to support the teachers in writing children small step goals and filling in any other necessary forms.
- Pupil progress meetings with the SLT also review pupil needs.
- Assessment and advice from external agencies will be kept in the child's file on the school's SENCO drive. This is only accessible via teacher log ins. Some paperwork is also kept in the locked filing cabinet in the SENCo Office to which the SENCO has the key. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to regularly review these files, using advice in them to form the child's personal goals.
- The school's assessment, monitoring and tracking system enables class teachers, the SENCo and other members of staff to monitor the progress of individual children.

Access to the Curriculum

At Virginia School we aim for "Quality First Teaching" for all our children, whilst providing access to the National Curriculum unless otherwise stated in an Education, Health and Care plan. We also acknowledge that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs.

Inclusion

- Children with SEN take part in all classroom learning and activities which it is possible for them to access with or without support.
- Children with SEN are taught in the classroom, using the same learning intentions, as far as possible, as the rest of the class, though with differentiated resources. When their needs require different learning objectives and activities, children are taught in class as far as possible.
- Arrangements are made to ensure children with SEN are able to join in educational trips to, e.g., museums and galleries, as part of the curriculum.
- Care is taken that children with hearing or vision impairment and left-handed children, are always seated in an appropriate place.
- Children with SEN often have access to appropriate learning assistant support to enable them to join in classroom learning and activities.

Evaluating Provision

The Governing Body meets its duties as laid down in the SEN code of practice by:

- Ensuring that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs
- Co-operating with the head teacher to determine the school's general policy and approach to provision for children with SEN
- Establishing the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements
- Maintaining a general oversight of the school's work
- Reporting to parents on the implementation of the school's SEN policy

Complaints procedures:

If parents/carers are concerned that their children's special needs are not being addressed by the school, we ask that they discuss their concerns first of all with the class teacher or SENCo . If a parent/carer wishes to make a formal complaint, copies of our Complaints Procedure can be obtained from the school office and from our website.

In Service Training

- The SENCo is available for training teachers and teaching assistants, both through formal training and on a day-to-day informal basis.
- All staff have access to information, advice and expertise available within the school.
- In-school INSET relevant to SEN is provided for teachers and teaching assistants, delivered by SENL or by people with appropriate expertise invited by the school.
- The SENCo promotes training for all staff.
- The SENCo will assess yearly the whole school training requirements.
- Teachers and support staff are informed about, and encouraged to attend, relevant courses in SEN, including courses relevant to the problems of a specified child.
- Teaching assistants are expected and enabled to attend training courses in SEN provision as part of their performance management.

Links to Support Services

- The school's Speech and Language Therapist (0.2 week via Barts Health), assesses children with language delay and/or difficulties. They provide advice and appropriate programmes that are then implemented within the school, usually delivered by specifically trained learning assistants.
- The school uses the services of an Educational Psychologist from the EPS (Educational Psychologist Service), to provide assessment and advice for specific pupils.
- The school also makes use of the service and expertise of the Occupational Therapy Service, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and the appropriate services for hearing and sight testing, when appropriate.
- We also have access to schools that provide outreach support. Phoenix School provides support for children on the autistic spectrum and Stephen Hawking School provides support for children with profound learning difficulties.
- For pupils whose SEN include behavioural difficulties, the school can call upon the Behaviour Support Team.
- The Educational Welfare Advisor (EWA) is consulted for problems with attendance or if Social Services are involved.

Working in partnership with parents – The Parent Voice

- Parents/carers of children with SEN have a right to know any concerns the school may have about their children's progress and what provision the school is making for them. They should be involved in the discussion of all entitlements and the stage at which SEN provision is being delivered.
- Parents/carers of children with SEN are informed about the identification of their children as having SEN at, or soon after, that identification. They are kept informed about the school's provision for their child's SEN, and their child's progress, through parent interviews, meetings with the SENCo and through meetings with their children's class teacher and/or SENCo at their own or the school's request.
- We believe that the parents/carers of children with SEN make a positive contribution to their children's progress especially if they know and understand what challenges their child is facing with their learning and how they can support their progress at home and school.
- Parent's views will be recorded as part of the SEN process.

Links with other schools

- When a child with SEND is admitted to Virginia, we liaise with their former school to obtain information, including relevant documentation, about provision for, and the progress of, the child while at that school.
- When a child with SEND leaves Virginia to go to another school, during their primary school career or for transition to KS3, we provide their new school with verbal and documented information about provision for, and the progress of, the child while they were at Virginia.
- After a child has left Virginia to go to another school, we cooperate at any time in providing any information or advice which is still felt necessary or helpful.

Links with other Agencies and Voluntary Organisations

The School Nurse visits the school regularly and will carry out preliminary testing of hearing, vision, motor control and any medical concerns we may have which we feel are interfering with a child's ability to progress in their education.

At other times, the SENCo can liaise with the School Nurse about concerns, or for advice when necessary, by telephone or email.

When there are concerns about a vulnerable pupil, or a child with SEND which need to be addressed to the social or educational welfare services, the SENCo or the class teacher liaises with the school's designated safeguarding lead, the deputy head teacher, Amanda Carr.

Evaluation

The success of the Special Needs Policy is demonstrated by the progress of the children. It is achieved by monitoring targets and evaluating the implementation of programmes.

Regular planning, review of programmes and decision making will be made collaboratively and involve all appropriate personnel.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCo, taking into account the views of the pupils, parents, staff and governors.

Related Policies

- Accessibility Plan
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Positive Behaviour Policy
- SEND Info Report
- Single Equalities Policy