



'Five Rivers is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment'

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy & Procedure

Five Rivers Child Care Ltd

Policy Owner	Headteacher
Authoriser	Head of Education
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1. Policy

1.1 Policy Statement

The SEND Policy has been written in accordance with:

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, published by the Department for Education and Department of Health and Social Care and last updated on 12 September 2024.

The Equality Act (2010)

The Children and Families Act (2014)

This Code of Practice provides statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and associated regulations and applies to England. It relates to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabled children and young people. A 'young person' in this context is a person over compulsory school age and under 25.

The policy will continue to be reviewed in line with current statutory requirements and any future changes arising from national SEND reform. The 2026 SEND reform proposals and consultation do not replace the current statutory duties until new legislation or statutory guidance is issued.

This policy should be read alongside Five Rivers' Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education. All staff must read Part One of KCSIE in full and follow local safeguarding policies and procedures.

This policy details the provision for young people with special educational needs that we provide that is 'additional to' or 'different from' the provision made for all young people in state education.

1.2 Terms and Definitions

The below table sets out a number of terms and definitions used within this document:

Term	Definition
SEN/D	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

1.3 Data Protection

The Five Rivers Group supports the objectives of the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and other legislation relating to Data Processing, including the Human Rights Act 1998, the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the regulations that underpin our services. The Five Rivers Group has a statutory obligation to process personal data in accordance with the provisions of the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Every member of The Five Rivers Group has an obligation to ensure that the information they process (use) is collected, maintained and disclosed in accordance with the United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, the Five Rivers Group Data Protection Policy and The Five Rivers Group Data Retention Policy.

1.4 Disclosure of Information

It is a criminal offence for a person to knowingly or recklessly sell, disclose or retain personal information outside of the Five Rivers Group under section 170 DPA 2018 without a legitimate purpose and legal basis. The Five Rivers Group considers these actions unauthorised and will take all necessary action to ensure personal data is not disclosed, retained or sold without a valid legal reason including referral to the criminal investigations team of the information commissioner's office (CRIT ICO).

2. Aims

Five Rivers believes that every teacher is a teacher of every pupil- including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Quality first teaching is vital; however, for some pupils there are occasions when further additional support may be needed to help them achieve their potential and targets. We strive to support all pupils to enable them to achieve at school. In order to do this many steps are taken to support them through their learning journey. At Five Rivers we strive to raise the aspirations and expectations for all children with SEND, providing a focus on outcomes.

We believe in providing every possible opportunity to develop the full potential of all. Pupils have

The right to a broad and balanced education, including extra-curricular activities where appropriate

Full access to a bespoke curriculum that is both appropriate and aspirational for the individual
All pupils are valued, and their self-esteem promoted.

We work in close partnership with parents/carers/care staff who play an active and valued role in a young person's education.

3. Objectives

Our objectives are:

- to work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- to maximise outcomes for pupils with SEND;
- to plan an effective and differentiated curriculum to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, to help them overcome their barriers to learning;
- to involve pupils and parents/carers/care staff in the identification and review of the targets
- set for individual pupils.
- to ensure that all who are involved with pupil are aware of the procedures for identifying their needs, supporting and teaching them;
- to provide support and advice to all staff working with young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- to work in close partnership, where appropriate, with outside agencies to support pupils who have special educational needs.

4. Definition of Special Educational Needs

A child or young person has Special Educational needs (SEND) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or

b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in a mainstream school.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

The Code of Practice does not assume that there are hard and fast categories of special educational needs but recognises that children's needs and requirements may fall within or across four broad areas.

5. SEND categories we work with

5.1 Communication and Interaction

This covers difficulties with speech, language, communication and social interaction. Autistic children and young people, including those with a formal diagnosis of autism, may have needs within this area.

5.2 Cognition and Learning

This is where children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation, and covers moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). It also includes specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

5.3 Autism

Autism is a pervasive neuro-divergence that affects the way a person communicates and relates to people around them. Individuals with an autism diagnosis will show a range of characteristics, and no two individuals are affected in exactly the same way.

All autistic individuals share, to differing extents, impairments affecting their ability to:

- understand and use non-verbal and verbal communication (for example not fully understanding the meaning of gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice).
- understand social behaviour which affects their ability to interact with others
- think and behave flexibly — which may be shown in restricted, obsessional or repetitive activities, understanding abstract concepts and/or difficulty with change.

In addition, some autistic young people have acute sensory needs in relation to an enhanced or reduced perception of sounds, sights, smell, touch and taste, which affects their response to these sensory input and integration. They may also have coordination and planning difficulties and unusual sleep and untypical behavioural presentation such as repetitive movements or self-stimulatory behaviours. All the above difficulties mean that the young people are often highly anxious from trying to make sense of the world, and this may have an effect on their behaviour. Autistic young people, especially females, may mask their challenges and present neuro-typical behaviour in order to fit in, or divert attention away from them in order to avoid interaction. This in itself can cause exhaustion and low self-esteem, leading to heightened challenges when the young person is out of the school environment, meaning problems can be understated or not fully understood.

5.4 Specific Learning Difficulties

The term 'Specific Learning Difficulty' (SpLD) is a term that refers to a difference or difficulty with particular aspects of learning. The most common SpLDs are dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder, dyscalculia and dysgraphia. An individual may have one of these independently or in combination with others and there is a continuum from mild to severe. All children and young people have different abilities to think, remember and learn. When an individual has difficulties or weaknesses in just one or two areas in contrast to average or good cognitive skills this is called a Specific Learning Difficulty for example, struggling to form letters and hear word sounds

5.5 Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH)

Social, Emotional and Mental Health SEMH Is an overarching term for children who demonstrate difficulties with emotional regulation and/or social interaction and who may also be experiencing mental health problems. Children and young people who have difficulties with their emotional and social development may require additional support to interact successfully and find it difficult to make and sustain healthy relationships. This may be because of adverse childhood experiences. These difficulties may be displayed through the child or young person becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as through challenging, disruptive or socially inappropriate behaviour.

5.6 Sensory and/or physical needs.

This includes visual impairment, hearing impairment, multi-sensory impairment and physical disability, as described within the four broad areas of need in the SEND Code of Practice.

6. Identifying Special Educational Needs:

Pupil Progress Meetings are held regularly. Here, the management team meet discuss the progress of the pupils with their teachers. This shared discussion may highlight any potential problems in order for further support to be planned. Any pupils who are falling significantly outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators and grade boundaries will be monitored.

At Five Rivers many of our pupils have already been identified as having some form of SEND and most have an EHCP however there are occasions in which new needs require identification.

- a) Once a pupil has been identified as possibly having SEND there will be additional monitoring by staff in order to gauge their possible difficulties.
- b) The pupils' teachers will adapt the curriculum to meet individual needs.

c) The SENCO/ management will be consulted in order to ascertain if further support and advice may be needed.

d) Parents/carers/care staff will be informed fully of every stage of the young person's development and the circumstances under which they are being monitored. They are encouraged to share information and knowledge with the school.

We recognise whilst the factors below may impact on progress and attainment, they cannot immediately identify the student as having SEN. In these cases, the whole child, rather than the obvious presenting need, will be considered along with any possible causal factors (long term or temporary) and any underlying (previously unmet) needs which may be relevant.

- Attendance and punctuality,
- Health and welfare,
- English as an additional language (EAL),
- Pupil Premium Grant eligibility,
- Being a Child Looked after

7. SEND Support

If a pupil has been identified as having a special educational need, appropriate provision will be put in place. Five Rivers follows the guidance contained in the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. This recommends a graduated approach to SEND support

The support provided consists of a four-part process:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

This is an on-going cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of the needs of the pupil grows. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions which are the most effective in supporting the pupil to achieve good progress and outcomes.

Assess

This involves clearly analysing the pupil's needs using the teacher's assessment and experience of working with the pupil, details of previous progress and attainment, comparisons with peers and national data, as well as the views and experience of parents/carers/care staff.

More detailed assessments may be administered and, where relevant, advice from external support services may be sought. Barriers to learning should be clearly identified at this stage which may include access to standardised assessments where appropriate.

Plan

Planning will involve consultation between a teaching & non-teaching staff working with the young person, SENCO/managers, parents/carers and, where appropriate, outside agencies, to plan the personalised learning, strategies and support required to overcome learning barriers. Clear, achievable targets will be set regarding the impact on progress, development and or behaviour that is expected and a clear date for review. Parental/carer involvement will be sought to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

All those working with the pupil, including support staff, will be informed of their individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies/approaches that are being employed and the outcomes that are being sought.

Do

The teachers of the pupil remain responsible for working with the pupil on a day-to-day basis. They will retain responsibility even where the personalised learning may involve group or one-to-one teaching.

They will work closely with teaching assistants (TA) to plan and assess the impact of support and

interventions and links with classroom teaching. The SENCO/ Managers will provide strategic support during this stage.

Review

Reviews of a pupil's progress will be made half termly. The review process will evaluate the impact of the plan; it will also take account of the views of the pupil and parents/carers. The class teacher, in conjunction with the SENCO/managers will revise the type and level of support and, if necessary, the cycle will begin again. Occasionally a pupil may need more expert support from an external agency. A referral will be made, with consent and forwarded to the most appropriate agency. After a series of assessments, a programme of support is usually provided to the school and home.

The graduated approach will include clear records of identified need, planned provision, expected outcomes, pupil views, parent/carer and social worker contributions where relevant, the professionals involved, review dates, and evidence of impact.

Pupil views will be gathered in accessible ways, including through alternative communication methods where needed.

7.2 Safeguarding, online safety and inclusive safeguarding education

Children and young people with SEND may be more vulnerable to abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying and barriers to disclosure. Staff must remain professionally curious and consider:

- behaviour
- attendance
- communication
- emotional presentation in context
- and report concerns without delay to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy.

Safeguarding education, including relationships education, personal safety, anti-bullying and online safety, will be adapted to each pupil's age, stage of development, communication needs and SEND profile. This includes support to understand online exploitation, harmful content, cyberbullying, misinformation and disinformation, AI-generated or manipulated images, and risks linked to communication vulnerabilities online.

7.3 Dyslexia support and trained dyslexia leads

All Five Rivers schools will have access to a trained dyslexia lead who supports the early identification of dyslexia and dyslexic-type difficulties, advises staff on dyslexia-friendly classroom practice, contributes to the graduated approach, and supports consistency of provision across the school.

Dyslexia is recognised within the broad area of cognition and learning and may affect reading accuracy and fluency, spelling, writing, working memory, processing speed, organisation and confidence. Support will be planned through the assess, plan, do, review cycle and will be informed by pupil voice, parent/carer views, teacher assessment, previous records, screening information and specialist advice where appropriate.

Dyslexia-friendly support may include reasonable adjustments such as reducing unnecessary copying, providing key vocabulary and learning points in advance, breaking instructions into smaller steps, checking understanding, allowing additional processing time, using visual prompts, providing alternatives to extended written recording, and giving access to assistive technology where this supports independence.

Class teachers remain responsible for ensuring high-quality, inclusive teaching for pupils with dyslexia or dyslexic-type difficulties. The dyslexia lead may support staff by recommending multisensory teaching approaches, structured literacy strategies, overlearning and retrieval practice, use of coloured overlays or accessible formatting where helpful, and practical approaches to spelling, reading comprehension, written expression and organisation.

Where assessment information indicates that a pupil may require exam access arrangements, the SENCO, dyslexia lead and relevant staff will work together to gather evidence of normal way of working and ensure any applications are made in line with current awarding-body

requirements. This may include consideration of additional time, a reader, scribe, word processor, assistive software or modified papers where appropriate.

7.4 A request for Statutory Assessment – EHC Request

If a pupil's needs are complex or severe, we may suggest that we ask the local authority for a statutory assessment which may lead to an Education and Health Care Plan (EHC Plan). This document will describe a pupil's SEND and the provision recommended. EHC Plans can involve the Local Authority (LA) providing extra resources to help a young person. These could include extra funding to support the child in school, specialised equipment, or attendance at a specialist school/ setting. This additional provision is reviewed annually or sooner if required and would include Parents/carers, class teacher, SENCO, and possibly other professionals.

Senior management takes lead responsibility for submitting a request for statutory assessment and will work closely with the designated teacher. In addition, for looked after pupils, We will work closely with the Virtual School as well as social workers.

Each Local Authority details the process of this assessment including timescales. More information can be found on the Local Authorities Local offer web page.

ANNUAL EHC REVIEWS

The review process will enable changes to be made to an EHC plan, so it remains relevant to the needs of our young person and the desired outcomes. There may be occasions when a re-assessment becomes appropriate, particularly when their needs change significantly.

The headteacher/SENCo will take lead responsibility for organising and preparing for the review and will work closely with the Young Person's teachers, carers and Local Authority.

In preparing for the review, the school must actively seek the written advice from the parents (Social Services guidance/advice will be relevant here), and additional professionals specified by the LA working with the young person.

Actions following the Review.

Once the review report is received by the LA they may take the following actions.

1. The EHC plan continues to be appropriate.
2. Amend the plan if:
 - Significant new needs have emerged;
 - Significant needs which are recorded on the care plan are no longer present;
 - The provision needs changing;
 - The child or young person should change schools.
3. Cease to maintain the EHC plan.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

8.1 SENCO's/ Managers Role

The SENCO/ school manager is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of special educational needs throughout the school. This will involve:

- overseeing day to day operation of the SEND policy
- managing class and individual SEND records
- coordinating provision for pupils with SEND
- working alongside staff to assist them in identifying, assessing, and planning for pupils need and ensuring that all make progress
- liaising with designated teacher where a Looked after Child has SEND
- advising on graduated approach to SEND Support
- advising on use of delegated budget/ other resources
- liaising with parents/carers of pupils with SEND
- links with other education settings and outside agencies
- liaising with other schools on transition
- ensuring that SEND records are up to date
- contributing to and, where necessary, leading the continuing professional development (CPD) of staff.
- ensuring SEND needs and outcomes can continue to be met during absence, remote learning, placement transition, medical need or other exceptional circumstances.

8.2 Teachers and Support Staff

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils they teach including pupils who access support from support staff and/or specialist staff.

High-quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have SEND.

Teachers have high aspirations for every pupil. With advice and support from the SENCO/ school leaders, clear targets are set and reviewed regularly. Teachers seek practical advice, teaching strategies, and information about the types of special educational need from the SENCO.

Teachers involve parents/carers and pupils in planning and reviewing the progress of SEND pupils.

The views and aspirations of parents/ carers and young people are sought and regular updates on progress provided.

In order for staff to keep up to date with information, they have access to:

- The Five Rivers SEND Policy
- Guidance on identification of SEND in the Code of Practice

- Information on individual pupil's Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, including pupil profiles/provision mapping, outside agency reports and targets set
- Practical advice, teaching strategies, and information about types of special educational needs and disabilities
- Information available through the schools Information Report on each school's website.

Examples of strategies we may use to support pupils, along with a bespoke package and clinical support:

- low arousal spaces
- sensory rooms
- movement breaks
- communication programmes
- social skills programmes
- emotional regulation programmes
- resilience exercises
- support for break and lunchtime activities
- visual timetables

8.3 Headteachers and School Leaders

It is the Headteachers responsibility to;

- Oversee all SEND provision in school
- Support and monitor the work of the SENCO
- Ensure the accessibility plan of the school is up to date and takes pupils with SEND needs in to account.
- Teaching observations
- Monitoring of teachers' planning and assessment records
- Analysis of assessment outcomes of SEND pupils
- Monitoring of special educational needs records, including pupil profiles, provision maps, support plans, Personal Education Plan reviews and Education, Health and Care Plan annual reviews.
- Monitoring of the progress of young people with special educational needs in meeting individual education plan targets.
- Monitoring of parental/ carer views about the quality of special educational needs provision.

8.4 Proprietors

The company undertakes regular monitoring and evaluation of policy and practice for special educational needs to ensure:

- The necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs
- Teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those children who have special educational needs
- Parents/carers are notified of a decision by the school that SEND provision is being made for their child
- The SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years is adhered to when carrying out duties towards all pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, providing strategic support to the school
- The SEND policy is published on the school website
- Arrangements are in place to support pupils with medical conditions
- Information regarding the arrangements for the admission of disabled children is published, including the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and their accessibility plans
- Ensuring that the school is as inclusive as possible and treats all children and staff in an equitable way.
- They monitor and review the SEND policy and their implementation of this alongside all other statutory policies as defined by the DfE.
- Supporting pupils and parents/carers (including parents, carers and social workers)
- The company attaches great importance to working in partnership with parents/carers and social workers to achieve the very best for all young people. A central objective of our policy is to work in partnership with parents, carers, care staff and social workers of young people with special educational needs and to recognise the vital role they have to play in supporting their young person's education.
- To this end, care staff and social workers are encouraged to meet regularly with teachers and to make an active contribution to identification and planning of action to meet their young people's special educational needs.

A close working relationship is vital to ensure:

- Early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND leading to appropriate intervention and provision
- Continuing social and academic progress of children with SEND
- Personal and academic targets are set and met effectively
- All are involved in important decisions regarding a pupil's education.

This may be through:

- Discussions with the class teacher
- Parents meetings
- Discussions with the SENCO and/or other professionals
- Target setting and monitoring of provision; through the Early Help process
- EHC Plan reviews

In cases where more frequent regular contact with parents is necessary, this will be arranged based on the individual pupil's needs. The SENCO/ headteacher may also signpost parents of pupils with SEND to the Local Authority.

In accordance with the Equality Act (2010), parents can access the school's SEND policy via the school websites.

9. Supporting pupils with medical needs

The company recognises that pupils with medical conditions may need additional support so that they have full access to education, including school trips and Physical Education where appropriate. Some pupils with medical conditions may also have disabilities and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

If a pupil has a medical need, then a detailed Health Care Plan is compiled with support from a medical practitioner in consultation with parents/carers/Social Worker. These are discussed with all staff who are involved with the pupil. When a Health Care Plan is implemented, we would also look at any staff training that may be needed.

Where necessary and in agreement with parents'/carers/ social worker medicines are administered in school but only where a signed Medicine Consent Form is in place to ensure the safety of both pupil and staff member. In these cases, then a medical risk assessment is also completed.

9.1 Related policies and complaints

This policy should be read alongside the:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Behaviour or Relationships Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy.

Parents, carers, social workers or placing authorities who have concerns about SEND provision should raise these with the class teacher, SENCO or Headteacher in the first instance. Where concerns are not resolved, they should follow the school complaints procedure. Families may also seek impartial information and support through their local

SENDIASS, and local authority SEND Teams.

10. Evaluating the success of Provision

Pupil progress will be monitored on a termly basis in line with the SEND Code of Practice. The success of SEND provision and personalised learning for children with SEND are recorded on a pupil profile or other appropriate format which is updated on a regular basis. This helps to identify whether provision is effective.

Other performance indicators include:

- Number of complaints regarding special educational needs provision
- Records of action taken in response to young people's special educational needs are identified in short term curriculum planning and are recorded on IEP's.
- Evidence through analysis of outcomes that young people with special educational needs are making progress.
- In service training (CPD)
- We aim to keep all school staff up to date with relevant training and developments in relation to the needs of pupils with SEND. Relevant SEND focused external training opportunities are made available to all teaching and support staff where appropriate.
- The SENCO/ headteacher will attend relevant SEND courses, disseminating relevant information to staff.

11. Bullying

Five Rivers will not tolerate harassment or bullying of children with SEND or disabilities. We believe that all children have a fundamental right to non-discriminative education, free from bias and disadvantage. The company will make every effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality. Please refer to the Anti-Bullying Policy for further information. This can be found on the school website.

12. Accessibility Plan

The Accessibility Plan is available on the school website.

Five Rivers will make reasonable adjustments to prevent disabled pupils from being placed at a substantial disadvantage and will avoid less favourable treatment because of disability.

Accessibility planning will consider:

- curriculum access
- communication

- information sharing
- the physical environment
- assessment arrangements
- the use of specialist resources or equipment where needed.

13. Risk Assessments

Where appropriate, risk assessments are written for individual children where their SEND may cause harm to themselves and/or others. These are discussed with the parents and class teachers. Individual PEEP (Personal Emergency and Evacuation Plans) are written for children with an EHC plan and any other child deemed necessary.

14. Admission Arrangements

The admission arrangements for all pupils are in accordance with national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

15. Transition Arrangements

Many strategies are in place to enable a pupil's smooth transition to and from Five Rivers Education, as well as transition between year groups and key stages. These include:

- discussions between the previous or receiving schools/teachers prior to the pupil
- joining/leaving
- access to the steppingstones programme
- additional and supported transition for pupils including relationship building and visits
- Education may also be provided within the care-home setting to support transition.

16. Access Arrangements

If required, standardised tests may need to be used when applying for access arrangements for Qualifications and exams. These tests may also be used to establish a baseline when young people are placed at our school, and they will be retested periodically to track progression.