



Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy

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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy in conjunction with our School Offer, aims to:

- Make sure our school fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Set out how our school will:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into next steps for life, whether this is into mainstream provision, a specialist setting, college and into adulthood
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or care giver and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Communicate with, and involve, pupils with SEND and their parents or care giver in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Make sure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

Rivers ESC adopts a whole school approach to special education needs (SEND) based on the principle that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. The majority of young people who attend Rivers arrive with identified needs and are on the SEND register in their previous settings.

All teaching staff deliver their subject with the aim to provide effective opportunities for all students by:

- Setting suitable learning challenges
- Responding to student's diverse learning needs
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning through assessment for individual needs.
 - Using the information on the students' provision map to ensure we are meeting need.

2. Vision and Values

At Rivers ESC, the staff, and The Management Committee recognise that many students at some point in their school career have special educational needs which may require support that enables them to come to terms with and overcome potential barriers to learning. As such our aim is to encourage all students to become confident, independent and successful young people who can excel in learning, engage positively in the community and to be ambitious for their futures. Through our underpinning values of respect, relationships, resilience and readiness, we endeavor to achieve the best outcomes for pupils with SEND through incorporating the following practice:

- We will provide all pupils with access to a broad and balanced differentiated curriculum adapted to the needs of the pupil as required
- We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and support them to meet their full potential, offering reasonable adjustments to enable success in the process
- We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied
- An environment where no student suffers adverse discrimination on the grounds of emotional, physical, or social difficulties
- If identified, a personalised learning programme to support individual needs will be devised
- A named Mental Health lead to support and develop emotional well being
- Access to a named Autism lead to develop the provision for students with an ASD diagnosis
- A SENCO at each site
- Working collaboratively with parents, care givers and external agencies to deliver the best outcomes for all

3. Legislation and guidance

At Rivers ESC:

This is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

- [Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- [The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The [Equality Act 2010](#) (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out The Management Committees responsibilities for pupils with SEND

- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At Rivers ESC we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- 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

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia• Moderate learning difficulties• Severe learning difficulties• Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder• Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>

AREA OF NEED	
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO

The SENCO at Rivers KS3 is Andrea Millard.

The SENCO at Rivers KS4 is Carolyn Bolger

They will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the headteacher and SEN management committee link – Charley Crowe to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner

- Work with the headteacher and management committee to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.2 The Management Committee

The management committee will:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Ensure EHCP reviews are done in a timely manner
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy
- Publish the school's accessibility plan
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND
- Make sure that all pupils from year 7 until year 11 are provided with independent careers advice

6.3 The SEND management committee link

The SEND link management committee member is Charley Crowe

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at management committee meetings

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the management committee on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

6.4 The headteacher

The headteacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and management committee to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.5 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach using the information presented in the provision map
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes

- Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
- Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

6.6 Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to half termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given a termly report on the pupil's progress

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

6.7 The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. SEN information report

The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

8. Our approach to SEND support

8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

All admissions to Rivers and the Phoenix Centre are through referral to the Headteacher by other Headteachers, via Fair Access Panel chaired by a County Integration officer through the DSPL 4 Primary at risk meetings or because of a permanent exclusion. Upon entry we receive information from the feeder school. From here, all pupils are assessed for:

- Learning difficulties

- Access Arrangements if applicable
- Baselined for starting points and
- Assessed for behavioural barriers

The induction process is completed with parental and student involvement.

Many students with SEND will have had their need for differentiated provision identified at primary/secondary school. Rivers work with feeder schools to ensure information is shared.

Frequently, our Outreach Team have worked with pupils in their previous settings and they assist Rivers staff with identification of need.

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, which will build on previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- 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 This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, social needs.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND. When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with adapting a lesson through high-quality teaching or through a differentiated/adapted task. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEN
- They are known to external agencies
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

We understand that parents and carers play a critical role in the education of their children and the development of positive attitudes towards learning, behaviour and relationships.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

Rivers and The Phoenix Centre emphasises the importance of developing a partnership with parents in meeting the needs of each student and it actively encourages parental support and participation.

Rivers and The Phoenix Centre involves all parents as much as possible including:

- On-going discussions of progress by teachers, support workers and the SENCo/ Deputy Headteacher (HT)
- Home-School Agreements
- Joint development of strategies to support development
- Participation in annual reviews and Pupil Progress Day Consultations
- Discussing learning targets and contributing to their student profiles
- Contributing to the assessment of their needs
- Contributing to the annual review

8.3 The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. Where required, this support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. Assess

The SENCO and teaching staff will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil (where agreeable) and their parents will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. Plan

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our Provision Map and Overview Document and will be shared with staff by the SENCO who will review and update the document accordingly. Updates can also be recorded using ARBOR.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. Do

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they 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 teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively. The SENCO will all seek additional specialist support if required.

4. Review

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents, pupils and mainstream school for dual registered pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEN provision

Pupils receiving SEN provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and LA commissioning arrangement (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including the use of provision maps and having weekly tracking meetings at KS3 and KS4.
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil, parents and mainstream schools
- Using external specialist services to gauge and alter our approach as required

9. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteacher and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

Our School Offer outlines the training support offered to staff.

10. Links with external professional agencies

The school recognises that it won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists
- General practitioners or pediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and Young Peoples mental health services (CAYPMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services
- Services for Young People
- Mental Health Support Team
- The Communication Team

11. Admission and accessibility arrangements

Add information here about your school's admission arrangements for pupils with SEN or a disability, and your accessibility arrangements.

11.1 Admission arrangements

Set out your school's arrangements for the admission of prospective pupils with SEN or a disability:

- Your arrangements for the admission of prospective pupils with a disability and prospective pupils with SEN
- How you make sure that all prospective pupils whose EHC plan names the school will be admitted before any other places are allocated
- An explanation of how your oversubscription criteria avoid unfairly disadvantaging prospective pupils with a disability or special educational needs – **NOT APPLICABLE TO RIVERS**
- FROM THE ADMISSIONS POLICY:
 - Children With EHCPs
 - It may be appropriate for children with EHCPs attending (or excluded) from mainstream schools to be admitted to ESC or The Phoenix Centre as interim provision, but the following should be determined during the admission process –
 - The proposed length of the child's stay at the ESC (this may be subject to review) and is subject to a Service Level Agreement being in place.
 - The proposed substantive educational placement (e.g. special school, mainstream school).
 - Arrangements for the child's EHCP to be reviewed to ensure his/her needs can be met appropriately during the stay at the ESC and to ensure the EHCP is still appropriate (this review should be arranged by the relevant SEN Officer)
 - In partnership with the ESC It may be considered that the young person's educational needs can be met appropriately by the ESC in order to complete their statutory education. This would be applicable at KS4.
 - However, KS1-3 at the ESC should never be considered to be the appropriate provision on a child's EHCP since DfE guidance for schools and Local Authorities clearly states that if a pupil's long term needs cannot be met in a mainstream school, a special school rather than a PRU should be named on a statement of special educational need.'

11.2 Accessibility arrangements

- The steps you have taken to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favorably than other pupils
- The facilities you provide to help disabled pupils access your school, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services
- How to find your school's accessibility plan. It should cover how you will:
 - Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
 - Improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services you provide
 - Improve the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils
- FROM THE ASSESSIBILITY POLICY:

- The school will act in accordance with its Admissions Policy. The same entry criteria will be applied to all pupils and potential pupils.

The school will strive to not put any pupil at a substantial disadvantage by making reasonable adjustments prior to the pupil starting at the school. All pupils, including those with SEND, will have appropriate access to all opportunities available to any member of the school community

SEE THE CENTRE'S SEPARATE ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

12. Complaints about SEND provision

Explain your school's approach here.

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the Deputy Head Teacher at either KS3 or 4 and the

We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to Local Authority Customer Service Team - Complaints in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy [insert link to complaints policy here].

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

To find out about disagreement resolution and mediation services in our local area,. You can request mediation by contacting [admin@riversesc.herts.sch.uk].

13. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

13.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term
- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

13.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by [SENCOs and Management Committee] **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

It will be approved by the full management committee.

14. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following:

- SEN information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Complaints policy
- Access Arrangements policies
- School Complaints policy (Section 12)
- Whole Centre Accessibility Arrangements (Section 11.2)

Approved by:	[Name]	Date:
Last reviewed on:	October 2023	
Next review due by:	October 2024	