

# Inspire - Enable - Achieve



## The Vale Federation SEN Policy

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Signed:

B zi Principal

Date 5th January 2026

David J Pearce Chair of Governors Date 5th January 2026

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## Statement of intent

**The Vale Federation** believes that all pupils are entitled to an education that enables them to achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood.

This policy outlines the framework the Federation will use in meeting its duties, obligations and principal equality values in providing an appropriate high-quality education for pupils with SEND.

Through successful implementation of this policy, the Federation aims to eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities.

The Federation will work with the LA, or equivalent, in ensuring that the following principles underpin this policy:

- The involvement of pupils and their parents in decision-making.
- The early identification of pupils' needs and early intervention to support them.
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High-quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.
- Greater choice and control for pupils and their parents over their support.
- Successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. For the purposes of this policy, a pupil is defined as having SEND if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age.
- A disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age in mainstream settings.
- Special educational provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream settings.

## 1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Local Government Act 1974
- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Children Act 1989
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Equality Act 2010
- The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Health and Care Act 2022
- DfE 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
- DfE 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'
- DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'
- DfE 'School Admissions Code'
- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'
- Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Admissions Policy

- Pupil Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Pupil Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Careers Policy
- Suspension and Exclusion Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Accessibility Policy

## **2. Objectives**

Every school is required to identify and address the SEND of the pupils that they support. Through the implementation of this policy, the Federation will:

- Use their best endeavours to make sure that pupils with SEND get the support they need to access the school's broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND.
- Ensure there is high-quality provision to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, with specific focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning.
- Fulfil its statutory duties towards pupils with SEND in light of the SEND code of practice.
- Promote disability equality and equality of opportunity, fulfilling its duties under the Equality Act 2010 towards individual disabled pupils.
- Make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled pupils are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
- Inform parents when they are making special educational provision for their child.

- Review, prepare and publish important information about the school and its implementation of relevant SEND policies, including:
  - Accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access to the curriculum and the physical environment for pupils with SEND.
  - Information about the admission arrangements for pupils.
  - A SEN information report about the implementation of this policy.

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently across the school.
- Ensuring the Federation meets its duties in relation to supporting pupils with SEND.

The Head of School is responsible for ensuring each school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with high quality teaching and a positive and enriching educational experience of for all pupils.

In enacting this policy, the Principal will:

- Ensure each school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEND.
- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure each school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and SEND of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure each school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice.
- Regularly and carefully reviewing the quality of teaching for all pupils, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against any pupils.

The Heads of School will be responsible for:

- Collaborating with the governing board and Principal, to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in each school.
- The day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEND policy.
- The coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND.

- Liaising with the relevant designated teacher for LAC with SEND.
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Liaising with the parents of pupils with SEND.
- Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies, as required.
- Being a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services.
- Liaising with the potential future providers of education to ensure that pupils and their parents are informed about the options, and a smooth transition is planned.
- Working with the relevant governors and the headteacher to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up-to-date, in line with the school's Data Protection Policy.
- Providing professional guidance to colleagues, and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies.
- Being familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and being able to work with professionals who are providing a supporting role to the family.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy.
- Planning and reviewing support for pupils with SEND on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aiming to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- Planning lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- Being accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class.
- Being aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided to all pupils they are working with.
- Understanding and implementing strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils with the support of the senior leaders and specialists.

- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Keeping the relevant figures of authority up-to-date with any changes in behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern. The relevant figures of authority include the headteacher.

## 4. Safeguarding

The Federation recognises that evidence shows pupils with SEND are at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment, so will ensure that staff are aware that pupils with SEND:

- Have the potential to be disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying.
- May face additional risks online, e.g. from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation.
- Are at greater risk of abuse, including child-on-child abuse, neglect, and sexual violence and harassment.

The Federation recognises that there are additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of pupils. These barriers can include, but are not limited to:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the pupil's condition without further exploration.
- These pupils being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other pupils.
- The potential for pupils with certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs.
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges.
- A different cognitive understanding and being unable to understand the difference between fact or fiction in online content.

The Principal and governing board will ensure that the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy reflects the fact that these additional barriers can exist when identifying abuse. When using physical intervention and reasonable force in response to risks presented by incidents involving pupils, staff will have due regard for the procedures outlined in the school's Physical Intervention Policy.

Care will be taken by all staff, particularly those who work closely with pupils with SEND, to notice any changes behaviour or mood, or any injuries, and these indicators will be investigated by the DSL in collaboration with the SENCO.

The governing board and Principal will ensure that pupils are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe including online. The school will ensure that teaching of safeguarding is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each pupil.

## 5. Admissions

For admissions arrangements, please see the Federation's admissions policy.

## 6. Transition

The Federation is aware of the importance of planning and preparing for the transitions between phases of education and preparation for adult life.

Children and Young People's EHC plans will be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to a pupil moving between key phases of education, to allow for planning for and, where necessary, commissioning of support and provision at the new setting.

## 7. Involving pupils and parents in decision-making

The Federation is committed to working in partnership with all parents in the best interests of their child and will provide an annual report for all parents on their child's progress.

The Federation will regularly liaise with parents in setting outcomes and reviewing progress. The class teacher, will meet with the parents **three** times each year through parents' evenings, and additionally through the annual review of the EHCP.

The planning that the Federation implements will help parents and pupils to express their needs, wishes and goals, and will:

- Focus on the pupil as an individual, not allowing their SEND to become a label.
- Be easy for pupils and their parents to understand by using clear, ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon.
- Highlight the pupil's strengths and capabilities.
- Enable the pupil, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in the future.
- Tailor support to the needs of the individual.
- Organise assessments to minimise demands on parents.
- Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.

The Federation will involve the parents and the pupil in discussions surrounding how the school can best implement the plan's provisions to help the pupil thrive in their education, and will discern the expected impact of the provision on the pupil's progress.

Where necessary, the Federation will facilitate support from an advocate to ensure the parent's views are heard and acknowledged.

## 8. Reviewing EHC plans

The Federation will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the year and conduct a formal review of the EHC plan at least annually.

The Federation will:

- Cooperate with the LA and relevant individuals to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the LA if requested.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the meeting, such as representatives from the LA SEN, social care and health services.
- Seek advice and information about the pupil prior to the annual review meeting from all parties invited, and send any information gathered to all those invited, at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- Ensure that sufficient arrangements are put in place at each school to host the annual review meeting.
- Contribute any relevant information and recommendations about the EHC plan to the LA, keeping parents involved at all times.
- Lead the review of the EHC plan to create the greatest confidence amongst pupils and their parents.
- Prepare and send a report of the meeting to everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting, setting out any recommendations and amendments to the EHC plan.
- Clarify to the parents and pupil that they have the right to appeal the decisions made regarding the EHC plan.
- Where possible for LAC, combine the annual review with one of the reviews in their care plan, in particular the personal education plan (PEP) element.
- Where necessary, provide support from an advocate to ensure the pupil's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Where necessary, facilitate support from an advocate to ensure the parent's views are heard and acknowledged.
- Review each pupil's EHC plan to ensure that it includes the statutory sections outlined in the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years', labelled separately from one another.

If a pupil's needs significantly change, the school will request a re-assessment of an EHC plan at least six months after an initial assessment. Thereafter, the governing board or Head of School will request the LA to conduct a re-assessment of a pupil whenever they feel it is necessary.

## **9. Supporting successful preparation for adulthood**

The Federation is aware that being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for its pupils. It recognises the importance of starting early, centring on pupil aspirations, interests and needs, and will ensure that pupils are supported at developmentally appropriate levels to make a smooth transition to what they will be doing next, e.g. moving on to higher education.

At Booker Park, the school will:

- Seek to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of pupils and use this as a basis for planning support around them.
- Support pupils so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships.
- Ensure that pupils are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school and in any wider community activity.
- Engage with secondary schools, as necessary, to help plan for any transitions.

At Stocklake Park, the school will:

- Ensure that the EHC plan review includes a focus on preparing for adulthood, with additional focus on transition and preparing for adulthood from Year 9 onwards.
- Build transition planning into the revised EHC plan to identify appropriate post-16 pathways for higher education and employment, and support preparation for independent living, maintaining good health in adult life and participating in society.
- Seek partnerships with employment services, businesses, housing agencies, disability organisations, and arts and sports groups, to help children understand what is available to them as they get older, and what it is possible for them to achieve.
- Engage with FE providers as necessary to help plan for any transitions.
- Ensure pupils from Year 8 until Year 13 are provided with independent careers guidance.

The school's Careers Policy details how the school will fulfil its statutory duties under section 42 of the Education Act 1997 and work with its pupils to ensure they are prepared for the workplace.

## **10. Managing complaints**

The Federation will publish the Complaints Procedure Policy on the school website.

Following a parent's serious complaint or disagreement about the SEND provision being made for their child, the school will contact the LA immediately to seek disagreement resolution advice.

The Federation is aware of the formal and informal arrangements for resolving disagreements at a local level and will work with the LA in responding to requests for information as part of procedures for:

- Disagreement resolution.
- Mediation.
- Appeals to the SEND Tribunal.

The school will meet any request to attend a SEND tribunal and explain any departure from its duties and obligations under the 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'.

## **11. Staff training and improving practice**

The Federation is committed to the learning and development of all its staff members and training opportunities will be provided and delivered in line with the school's CPD and Training Policy.

Each school's leadership team will assess staff competencies and ensure that CPD provision allows staff to develop their awareness, skills, and practices in identifying, educating, and assessing its pupils.

## **12. Use of data and record keeping**

All information about pupils will be kept in accordance with the Federation's Records Management Policy and Data Protection Policy.

The Federation's records will:

- Include details of SEND, outcomes, action, agreed support, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists, as part of its standard management information system to monitor the progress, behaviour and development of all pupils.
- Maintain an accurate and up-to-date register of the provision made for pupils with SEND.
- Be kept securely so that unauthorised persons do not have access to it, so far as reasonably practicable.

The school keeps data on the levels and types of need within the school and makes this available to the LA and Ofsted.

### **Confidentiality**

The school will not disclose any EHC plan without the consent of the pupil's parents, except for specified purposes or in the interests of the pupil, such as disclosure:

- To a SEND tribunal when parents appeal, and to the Secretary of State under the Education Act 1996.

- On the order of any court for any criminal proceedings.
- For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986, or from the Children Act 1989 relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and LAs.
- To any person in connection with the pupil's application for students with disabilities allowance in advance of taking up a place in HE.
- To the headteacher (or equivalent position) of the setting at which the pupil is intending to start their next phase of education.

### **13. Publishing information**

The Federation will publish information on the school website about the implementation of this policy.

The information published will be updated **annually** and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible.

The SEN Information Report will be prepared by the governing board and will be published on the school website. It will include all the information outlined in paragraphs 6.79 and 6.83 of the 'Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25 years'.

### **14. Joint commissioning, planning and delivery**

The Federation will work closely with local education, health and social care services to ensure pupils get the right support.

The Federation will assist the LA in carrying out their statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, by ensuring that services work together where this promotes children and young people's wellbeing or improves the quality of special educational provision (Section 25 of the Children and Families Act 2014).

The Federation will draw on the wide range of local data sets about the likely educational needs of pupils with SEND to forecast future needs, including:

- Population and demographic data.
- Prevalence data for different kinds of SEND among children at the national level.
- Numbers of local children with EHC plans and their main needs.

- The numbers and types of settings locally that work with or educate pupils with SEND.
- An analysis of local challenges or sources of health inequalities.

The Federation will plan, deliver and monitor services against how well outcomes have been met, including, but not limited to:

- Improved educational progress and outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Where pupils also have a medical condition, their provision will be planned and delivered in coordination with the EHC plan.

## 15. Local offer

The school's governing board will collaborate with and support the LA in developing and reviewing the Local Offer, where necessary and appropriate, to ensure that it is:

- **Collaborative:** Where appropriate, the Federation will work with LAs, parents and pupils in developing and reviewing the Local Offer. The Federation will also cooperate with those providing services.
- **Accessible:** The Federation will collaborate with the LA during development and review to ensure that the LA's Local Offer is easy to understand, factual and jargon-free; is structured in a way that relates to pupils' and parents' needs, e.g. by broad age group or type of special educational provision; and is well-signposted and -publicised.
- **Comprehensive:** The Federation will help to ensure that parents and pupils understand what support can be expected to be available across education, health and social care from age 0 to 25 and how to access it. The Federation will assist the LA in ensuring that the Local Offer includes eligibility criteria for services, where relevant, and makes it clear where to go for information, advice and support, as well as how to make complaints about provision or appeal against decisions.
- **Up-to-date:** The school will work with the LA to review the Local Offer to ensure that, when parents and pupils access the Local Offer, the information is up-to-date.

The school will provide the LA with information about their existing SEND provision and capabilities to support pupils with SEND to aid in the drafting of the Local Offer, where required.

## 16. Monitoring and review

The policy is reviewed on an **annual** basis by the Principal in conjunction with the governing board.