



Nicol Mere School

Special Needs Policy 2025/2026

This policy was reviewed and updated in January 2026 in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015. At Nicol Mere it is the mission of the Governors and staff, in conjunction with parents/carers, to create an environment conducive to providing each child with the necessary stimuli to enable them to attain their full potential in all areas of the curriculum. Our school local offer is available on our website under the heading of Key Information – SEN local offer.

1. Definition of Special Educational Needs

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age;
- Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority; and
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions of the above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children are not 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.

Children may have special educational needs either throughout or at any time during their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment for children with special educational needs takes account of the type and extent of the difficulty experienced by the child. The SEND Code of Practice 2015 identifies 4 broad areas of need. These are:

- Communication and Interaction;
- Cognition and Learning;
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties;
- Sensory and/or physical needs.

2. Aims and objectives

In order to provide effective education for children with Special Educational Needs, the school will:

- Create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child;
- Have regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs and ensure that parents/carers are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child;
- Acknowledge the responsibility of each member of staff to consider the accessibility of the curriculum for all children and its relevance, so that each child can reach his/her potential;
- Ensure that there is evidence in teachers' planning, of differentiated work, to cater for the needs of individual children;
- Operate a system of early identification and assessment of children who experience difficulties in accessing the curriculum;
- Provide opportunities for class teachers to discuss children with special educational needs with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo);
- Monitor progress and record planning decisions for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Consult with outside agencies for help or advice;



- Seek the co-operation of parents/carers, in meeting the needs of children, by involving them in regular discussion and informing them of the child's progress;
- Ensure that resources are available, within budget constraints;
- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate in-service training;
- Plan opportunities for pupils with SEN to progress and achieve in all areas;
- Ensure that there is a positive ethos in school among staff and pupils towards SEN /disability (strategies for addressing any bullying of pupils with SEN/disability outlined in bullying policy).

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

The Head teacher has the responsibility for the day to day management of all aspects of the school's work, including the provision for children with special educational needs and disability. The Head teacher will keep the governing body fully informed. The Head teacher will work with the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and staff to ensure that the policy is put into practice.

SENDCo

The person responsible for co-ordinating the day to day SEND provision at our school is Miss L Norris

The Governing Body

The Governing body will determine the school's policy and general approach to the provision for children with special educational needs, maintain a general oversight of the school's work and report annually to parents on the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs.

Named Governor for SEND: Mrs Sally Gratton

Co-ordinating the provision of SEN

At Nicol Mere the SENDCo has responsibility for:

- Managing the day to day operation of the SEN policy;
- Coordinating the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers on the graduated approach;
- Overseeing the records of all pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Liaising with parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- Contributing to the in service training of staff;
- Liaising with external agencies;
- Reporting to Head teacher and Governors;
- Monitoring the provision mapping and evaluations;
- Maintaining records for SEN children and passing them on when pupils leave.

Admission Arrangements.

All admissions to the school are based on the school's 'Admissions Policy'. There is no differentiation made between pupils with, or without, special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Liaison will take place between schools, both when a pupil with special educational needs is new to the school and if they transfer from Nicol Mere, in terms of records, evidence and advice.



Facilities

Although there is no special unit, the school is well resourced with the following:

- Disabled toilets are available in each building;
- A ramp to the junior building and a portable ramp to access other exits;
- Wheelchair access to all classrooms;
- Shower unit in the infant building;
- A Sound Field System in the foundation stage.

Resources

The allocation of resources will be based on the following principles;

- To enable pupils with special educational needs to experience success and achievement and to reach their full potential;
- To make the most efficient use of resources including keeping up to date with new technologies to support communication, teaching and learning for all pupils.

All pupils with Statements/ Education Health Care Plan will be allocated with the resources to meet the objectives of their Statement/ Education Health Care Plan within the funding provided.

Pupils experiencing difficulties will be supported within the classroom by their Class Teacher / a Teaching Assistant. They may be supported within a group or on a one to one basis depending on the need. Pupils may be occasionally withdrawn from class for specialist support.

A Link teacher from the Targeted Education Support Service comes into school for a number of sessions in the school year and is timetabled to provide assessment, support and advice for pupils who may be experiencing difficulties.

Where necessary, additional support and advice may be provided by an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapy, Primary Mental Health Team, Occupational Therapy, Outreach team or the school nurse.

Identification

The school's system for observing and assessing the progress of individual pupils will provide information about areas where a pupil is not progressing satisfactorily. All pupils progress at different rates but where pupils fail to achieve adequate progress, despite having access to a differentiated programme, then teachers may need to consult with the SENDCo to consider what else needs to be done. This review may lead to the conclusion that the pupil requires help over and above that which is normally available within the particular class or subject. The key test for action is evidence that:

- Current rates of progress are 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;
- Little or no progress despite the use of targeted teaching approaches;
- Presenting persistent social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties;
- Sensory or physical problems that result in little progress despite the provision of appropriate aids or equipment;



- Poor communication or interaction, requiring specific interactions to access learning.

An initial meeting will be set up with the class teacher, parent and SENDCo to discuss any concerns. If the meeting concludes that additional and different provision is necessary for the pupil to make progress, a support plan will be put into place following the four stages of the Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do and Review.

SEN Provision

Special educational provision is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools in the area. If a child is considered to have a Special Educational Need, we will always require consent from their parents or carers to put in place a plan of action. Once agreed, we will make reasonable adjustments to teaching so that the child will be able to fully access the Curriculum. This will be achieved by:

- Carefully adapting teaching and learning to a child's specific need;
- Creating Support Plans to all children identified as having SEN;
- Creating targets for children to work towards, to allow them to access the curriculum;
- Keeping Support Plans in a place where all staff can easily access them;
- Carrying out all SEN provision that has been agreed with parents/carers, teachers, SENDCo and head teacher;
- Contacting outside agencies when additional specialist support is necessary and carry out all targets and strategies that have been implemented by outside agencies;
- Involve the child in decision making about their special educational provision;
- Working in partnership with parents/carers, valuing their views and contributions and keeping them fully involved in their child's education.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The pupil's class teacher will remain responsible for working with the pupil and providing quality first teaching on a daily basis and for planning and delivering an individualized programme. If the school decides that additional and different provision is necessary for the pupil to make progress they will contact the parents/carers and put effective special educational provision in place via a support plan, following the four stages of the Graduated Approach:

- Assess
- Plan
- Do
- Review

The support plan will be reviewed regularly with parents. Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's area of need, the school will consider involving outside specialists to advise them, with parental consent. Another support plan will be written and carried out.

Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

In the new SEND Code of Practice, an Education, Health and Care assessment replaces the Statement of Need. Despite Nicol Mere having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child and the child has not made expected progress, the school or parents may consider requesting an Education Health and Care needs assessment. This has to be an evidence based request. All EHC plans must be reviewed at least annually with the parents/carers, the pupil, the LEA, the school



and professionals involved are invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's needs or to the special educational provision specified in the Education Health and Care plan.

Educational Inclusion

In our school we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our pupils, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations and aim to achieve these through the removal of barriers to learning or participation. We want all our pupils to feel that they are a valued part of the school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that pupils:

- Have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- Require different strategies for learning;
- Acquire, assimilate and communicate at different rates; and
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Restrictive Intervention Guidance (April 2026)

Some children with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours that are harmful to themselves or others. This can lead to SEND children being disproportionately subject to the use of restrictive interventions. Schools should seek to understand the underlying triggers of challenging behaviour so that they can provide a proactive support. Schools should utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur, and develop proactive strategies to reduce the likelihood of restrictive interventions being used.

See Nicol Mere Behaviour Policy for further guidance.

Complaints Procedures

Any complaints about Special Educational Provision within the school will be dealt with through discussions with the Head teacher, SENDCo and class teacher. If concerns are not resolved they will be referred to the school complaints procedure.