

Special Educational Needs Information Report

Contents

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

Assess, Plan, Do, Review	2
What support is available for my child with Special Educational Needs (SEN) at The Willows?	3
Who are the best people in the school to talk to about my child's difficulties with learning/special educational needs and/or disabilities?	4

SEN NEEDS

Four broad areas of need and support	6
How will The Willows support my child with identified SEN starting at school?	7
How else may a child be identified as having a specific SEN learning difficulty?	7
How will the teaching at The Willows be adapted for my child with SEN?	7
How will The Willows support me as a parent of a child with SEN?	7
Is The Willows physically accessible to those with SEN?	8
Education Health and Care Plan (EHC)	8

CONSULTING WITH CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR PARENTS

Consulting with parents and learners	8
How will the school let me know if there are any concerns about my child's learning?	9
How can I let my child's school know if I am concerned about my child's progress in school?	9
How does The Willows measure my child's progress and how will I know?	9

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff with expertise	9
How are the staff at The Willows supported and trained to work with children with SEN?	10

STAFF DEPLOYMENT

Information on how staff are deployed	10
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FINANCE

Overview	10
----------	----

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS AND TRANSITIONS

Overview	11
How will The Willows support my child when they are leaving this school, or when moving on to another class?	11

COMPLAINTS

Overview	12
----------	----

CHALLENGES THIS YEAR

Overview	12
----------	----

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Overview	12
Relevant school policies underpinning this SEN Information Report	13
Legislative Acts taken into account when compiling this report	13
Contact details of support services for parents	13

SEN Information Report

SENCO: Mrs G Harrison
Dedicated SEN time: 3 days

Contact: through the school office

SEN Link Governor: Mr J Hodgkinson – retired October 2025 – new SEN Governor to be appointed

Local Offer Contribution: <https://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk>

Whole School Approach

The Willows Primary School is almost completely contained on a flat level except for two classrooms, which have 2 steps to access. Two other classrooms are in a porta-cabin and these have steps and a ramp. We also have two classrooms in The Mount which can be accessed by either a ramp or steps. All rooms, except two mobile classrooms and one of The Mount classrooms, are fitted with sound field systems to assist children with any hearing impairment. All areas are easily accessible. Adults and children should be able to access our communication system to request entrance and the pedestrian gate has a lowered exit button. Our Admissions Policy and Accessibility Plan do not discriminate against or prevent individuals from applying for admission to the school. We welcome all to The Willows and strive to meet and support parental requests. All admission applications are overseen by the Local Authority and are subject to a predetermined set of criteria. We regularly review and record what we offer EVERY child or young person in our care and what we offer additionally. This helps us embed our high expectations and a need for a differentiated and personalised approach to teaching and learning. We make it a point to discuss our aims and high expectations with ALL our learners.

All of our provision follows this cycle:



All teachers are responsible for every child in their care, including those with special educational needs. (Reference: Teaching and Learning Policy September 2024)

Assess: The school monitors and reviews the progress and development of all pupils and young people. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN. The majority of pupils make progress through such teaching.

Plan: Where progress gives cause for concern, teachers work in partnership with parents/carers to develop a plan to ensure that children/young people with SEN or disability receive the right levels of support for their future learning and development. Teachers, supported by the Senior Leadership Team, make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. Where pupils are falling behind, or making inadequate progress given their age and starting point, they are given extra support.

Do: This cycle is started by the class teacher and involves co-ordinated work with the SENCo and supporting colleagues. Parents/carers should be engaged at each stage of this cycle, contributing their views into assessment and planning. Intended outcomes should be shared with parents/carers and reviewed with them.

Review: The effectiveness of the support and the impact on the pupil's progress should be reviewed in line with an agreed date. Adequate progress can include progress which:

- is similar to that of peers starting from the same baseline
- matches or betters pupil's previous rate of progress
- closes the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- prevents the attainment gap growing wider

Where a pupil continues to make little or no progress, is not developing as expected or is not responding to action being taken, then the school will consider involving external professionals to advise and assist further. They may also help in identifying those pupils whose need for long term support is such that an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) might be required. Each pupil will have a Programme Summary Sheet which will effectively track input and the review will highlight impact. These will provide evidence of the outcomes of interventions offered to the pupil.

What support is available for my child with Special Educational Needs (SEN) at The Willows?

Quality first teaching by class teacher (Universal Support)

For your child this would mean:

- the teacher has the highest possible expectations
- all teaching is based upon building on what your child already knows, can do and can understand
- different ways of teaching (for example, practical activities and visual supports) are in place so that your child is fully involved in learning in class
- specific strategies are in place to support learning
- progress is formally assessed and recorded regularly throughout the year. Targets are set for your child to ensure that gaps in their understanding and learning are addressed
- some additional individual or small group support may take place, either in the classroom during class time, or outside of whole-class learning

Targeted interventions run by school staff – internal (Targeted Support)

- these may be run in the classroom or in sessions outside of whole-class learning
- they may be delivered by a Teacher, a Teaching Assistant (TA) or a Higher-Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) who has had specific training to run these groups
- our Inclusion Lead (Mrs Ball), SENCo (Mrs Harrison), Assistant SENCo (Mrs Scott) and Safeguarding Officer (Mrs Ellis) as well as our keyworker Teaching Assistants work across the school to support children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
- children will engage in group or individual sessions with specific targets to help them to make progress
- all interventions are planned under the guidance of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and class teachers
- all interventions are monitored and reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and class teachers
- the outcomes are discussed with the SENCo and the appropriate next stage planned

Targeted interventions run by specialist outside agencies – external (Targeted Support)

These may be from Local Authority central services such as:

- Inclusive Learning Services (ILS), previously Special Educational Needs and Disability Services (SENDS), supporting families, pupils, schools and their staff in all aspects of SEND, including those with a hearing impairment (HI) or a visual impairment (VI)
- speech and language therapy (SALT) (NHS service)
- educational psychology service (EPS)
- occupational therapy or physiotherapy (OT, PT)
- school nurse (NHS service)

For your child this would mean:

- you will be asked to give your permission for the school to refer your child to an outside agency
- help would be given to the school and yourself to further understand your child's particular needs and for them to be supported more effectively
- an external professional working with your child to understand their needs
- an external professional may make recommendations, including:
 - making changes to the way your child is supported in class
 - setting clear targets which will be reviewed and used to evaluate progress
 - running an intervention group under the guidance of the external professional
 - running an intervention group or individual work directly with the external professional

Having consulted with pupils, young people and their parents, all our additional provision (internal or external) is based on an agreed outcomes approach.

Who are the best people in the school to talk to about my child's difficulties with learning/special educational needs and/or disabilities?

- **The class teacher**

Responsible for:

- daily teaching and regular assessment
- identifying pupils making less than expected progress
- planning and delivering appropriate interventions
- reviewing interventions with parents and colleagues
- seeking additional advice and support from the SENCo

- **The SENCo**

Responsible for:

- co-ordinating the support for pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) and developing the school's SEN Policy to make sure all pupils get a consistent, high-quality response to meeting their needs in school
- ensuring that you as a parent or carer are:
 - involved in supporting your child's learning
 - kept informed about the support your child is receiving
 - involved in reviewing your child's progress
- liaising with the outside agencies who help support your child's learning
- updating the school's SEN Register (a system for ensuring all the SEN pupils in this school are known) and making sure that there are excellent records of your child's progress and needs
- providing specialist support for teachers and support staff in the school to enable pupils with SEN achieve

- **The SEN Team**

Mrs Harrison – SENCo

Mrs Scott – Assistant SENCo

- **The Pastoral Team**

Mrs Ball – Assistant Head/Inclusion Lead

Mrs Ellis – Safeguarding Officer

- **The Senior Leadership Team**

Responsible for:

- the strategic vision of SEN and inclusion across the school
- leading the educational development of the school and ensuring that each pupil's educational programme meets their individual needs
- monitoring and evaluating the standards of teaching and learning across the school
- monitoring and evaluating the standards of progress across the school

- **The Governing Body**

Responsible for:

- making sure that the necessary support is in place for any pupil with SEND who attends this school

SEN Needs

Children and young people's SEN are generally thought of in the following four broad areas of need and support:

1 Communication and Interaction

Included in this category are:	speech, language and communication needs	- SLCN
	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	- ASD

2 Cognition and Learning

Included in this category are:	moderate learning difficulties	- MLD
	specific learning difficulties	- SpLD
	severe learning difficulties	- SLD
	profound and multiple learning difficulties	- PMLD

3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

(Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities January 2015)

In order to meet the needs of individuals the school offers a flexible approach. Strategies used include: a flexible phased start to school, buddy system, Pastoral Team, specific support and play outside at lunch times, Circle Time, SEAL, PSHE, learning through play and games.

4 Sensory and/or Physical Needs

Included in this category are:	physical disability	- PD
	vision impairment	- VI
	hearing impairment	- HI
	multi-sensory impairment	- MSI

(Reference: SEN Policy updated October 2025)

In 2024-2025 we had 689 on roll and 104 of those were receiving some form of SEN Support. SEN was 15% of the number on roll. There were 22 pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan and 82 pupils at SEN Support.

Meetings, with staff and parents, have taken place to update the needs and categories of each pupil. Where a pupil is continuing on the SEN Register parents have been informed with a 'continue note'.

How will The Willows support my child with identified SEN starting at school?

- you will be invited to visit the school with your child to have a look around and meet the Pastoral Team and school staff
- you will also be invited to a New Parents' Evening in which details of your child's needs are noted, and in which you can ask questions relating to the school
- if other professionals or outside agencies are involved in supporting your child a meeting may be held to discuss your child's needs and to share strategies that are used
- staff may wish to make a home visit
- the class teacher and a member of the Pastoral Team may wish to visit the current setting your child attends, if applicable
- we may suggest adaptations to the transition period to help your child to settle more easily
- the staff will closely monitor the progress your child makes and discuss this with you

How else may a child be identified as having a specific SEN learning difficulty?

- the teacher continually assesses the needs of all pupils in their class
- every pupil is assessed regularly throughout the year
- progress meetings are held three times a year with teaching staff and SLT
- progress of all pupils is discussed and any pupil not making their best possible progress is identified
- the SLT and SENCo monitor progress of pupils and liaise with class teachers
- interventions are then planned and set for the pupils
- these are reviewed and outcomes of the interventions are discussed with parents
- if a child continually requires a significant amount of support and does not respond to interventions a meeting will then be set with the parent and the SENCo and referrals to relevant outside agencies may be made

How will the teaching at The Willows be adapted for my child with SEN?

- class teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of all groups of pupils in their class
- planning and teaching will be adapted on a daily basis if needed to meet your child's learning needs and to enhance your child's experiences
- specially trained support staff can implement the teacher's differentiated planning
- specific resources and strategies will be used to support your child
- these may be on an individual, group or whole class basis, so that they can learn most effectively and become independent learners
- teaching will include any targets or suggestions made by outside agencies

How will The Willows support me as a parent of a child with SEN?

- there are daily opportunities to talk to your child's class teacher, after school is the best time, or ask to meet them
- newsletters and information sheets are regularly sent home to keep you up-to-date with class and home learning
- the home-school diary is an excellent means of communication between you and your child's teacher
- staff are available to meet with you to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have, call in at the office to see if an appointment is needed
- meetings can be arranged with outside agencies who work with your child and they can offer you advice on how to support your child at home

Is The Willows physically accessible to those with SEN?

- the school is accessible to people with physical disabilities
- the majority of the school is almost completely contained on a flat level except for two classrooms, which have 2 steps to access. Two other classrooms are in a porta-cabin and these have steps and a ramp. We also have two classrooms in The Mount which can be accessed by either a ramp or steps.
- there are a number of disabled toilets across the school
- we ensure that high quality equipment and support are accessible to all
- specialist equipment and provisions, for example audio surround system and workstations, enable individuals to be fully included

Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)

From September 2014 new regulations came into force. Statements of SEN are no longer issued. All our previous statements have now converted to EHC Plans in line with the schedule published by Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority (March 2018). More information can be found on the Stoke-on-Trent Local Offer and website:

<https://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk>

EHC plans are usually given to children whose learning needs are severe, complex and lifelong. They are given to children who need additional support above and beyond the support outlined earlier in this document. Support can be provided in many ways, including quality first teaching, targeted interventions, an individualised curriculum and support from outside agencies. The EHC Plan will outline the areas of need, the outcomes, and the provision needed to achieve these outcomes. A planning discussion with parents, school staff and the individual will take place to establish the support and interventions needed for the forthcoming term.

At our termly reviews for our SEN pupils we look at the progress of the individual and where expected progress has not been made, we may have a further discussion about the school or the parents requesting an Education, Health and Care Assessment. Working together the school and the parents would then provide evidence to the local authority of support and strategies already implemented, along with the impact and outcomes.

Consulting with children, young people and their parents

Involving parents and learners in the dialogue is central to our approach and we do this through:

Event	Who's involved	Frequency
Parents' evenings	Parents, pupils, staff, Pastoral Team, SEN Team	twice yearly
Annual update of SEN information	Parents, SEN Team, class teacher	annually
Termly update of SEN information	Parents, SEN Team, class teacher	termly
New pupil intake evening	Parents, pupils, staff, Pastoral Team, SEN Team	annually
Pupil school report	Class teacher, head teacher	annually

How will the school let me know if there are any concerns about my child's learning?

- if your child is identified as possibly having SEN, the school will set up a meeting to discuss this with you in more detail:
 - initially the class teacher will speak to you to discuss concerns and to listen to any concerns you may have
 - the school may suggest that your child needs some agreed individualised support in school. Staff will tell you how the support will be used and what strategies will be put in place.
 - if further investigation is needed, a meeting will be set up with the SENCo who will discuss the next steps with you, including requesting a signature giving permission to discuss your child and their needs further
 - the Pastoral Team may also be involved at this stage

How can I let my child's school know if I am concerned about my child's progress in school?

- if you have concerns about your child's progress you should speak to your child's class teacher initially
- if the class teacher requires additional advice or support, they will contact the SENCo
- you may wish to discuss your concerns with the SENCo
- you may also wish to discuss your concerns with a member of the Pastoral Team

How does The Willows measure my child's progress and how will I know?

- your child's progress is continually monitored by his/her class teacher and targets adjusted accordingly
- their progress is reviewed formally at the end of each term
- parent consultations are held three times per year and your child's targets are then shared with you
- formal end of year reports are provided
- targets from outside agencies are reviewed as appropriate by the professional and are shared with the parent/carer
- if your child is on the SEN Register, we will review and set targets up to three times per year. This could include using an Assess, Plan, Do, Review plan (APDR).
- if your child has an EHC plan they will receive an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or an Assess, Plan, Do, Review plan (APDR). These set and review targets internally three times per year.
- the progress of children with an EHC Plan is formally reviewed at an Annual Review and all those involved with your child's education, including yourselves, are invited to attend.

Staff development

We are committed to developing the ongoing expertise of our staff. Currently we have the following teaching expertise:

Initials of person	Area of expertise	Level
GH	SEN and SpLD	specialist
TP and RT	Hearing Impaired	advisory Teachers of the Deaf

There is a Resource for Deaf Children within the school and all staff work closely together on a daily basis.

How are the staff at The Willows supported and trained to work with children with SEN?

- the SLT and SENCo will support the class teacher in planning for children with SEN
- a programme of staff training is set by the SLT. This may take place during INSET days, or it may occur for specific groups of teachers or teaching assistants, during the term. It may focus on specific areas of need such as SALT, ASD, epilepsy, asthma and so on.
- individual training for an identified staff member may be put into place, linked with the needs of an individual child with SEN
- training needs may be identified through the school's rigorous performance management process
- staff from the resource for deaf children support and update all school staff on areas concerning hearing
- staff from the resource for deaf children form an integral part of the school and are invited to take part in training
- the SENCo and the teachers attached to the resource for deaf children liaise on a daily basis

In 2024-2025 we continued to train staff, including new staff. All new staff received training to use resources and documentation designed to support those with special educational needs. Whole school training was completed on Pathological Demand Avoidance, Emotion Coaching, Safeguarding L1, KCSIE Knowledge-checker Quiz, and Adaptive Teaching. In addition, individual staff completed training on areas specific to their roles. These included: Cyber Awareness, Whole School Wellbeing, Fire Warden in education, Pupil Voice, Autism and Girls, Social Stories and Comic Strip Conversations, SEMH Training Programme, and Strategies for Supporting Emotional Regulation.

Staff deployment

Considerable thought, planning and preparation go into utilising our support staff to ensure pupils achieve the best outcomes, gain independence and are prepared for adulthood from the earliest possible age.

Every year group has at least one TA whose role is to support classes and groups with english and mathematics during the morning and under the direction of the teacher deliver targeted intervention programmes throughout the day.

Finance

Our high needs top-up fund for 2024-2025 was £30622.80. Additional expenditure breakdown was as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| • Support staff (additional to quality first provision) | = £214843 |
| (Staff Salaries + PEP 1:1 for the period) | |
| • Commissioned external services | = £ 10913 |
| • Resources purchased for the SEN Department | = £ 238 |
| • Spending on PEP Code | = £ 4075 |
| • Training | = £ 275 |

The school can access other external services, including ILS and EP. These additional services operate on a Traded Arrangement and have to be paid for out of the school budget. A list of services we work with can be found on pages 7 and 8 of our policy. The costs for these are predetermined and form part of the annual school budget which is allocated to the school by the local authority.

School Partnerships and Transitions

Overview

Each year we support our year 6 (currently 90) as they move on to high school. We also support other pupils as they move mid-year or term.

We work very closely with our feeder partners to support those with special educational needs or disabilities move to the next phase of their education. We hold meetings for parents to discuss primary-secondary transfer and, if required, invite a member of the LA admissions team to take questions about the process. Teaching staff liaise with high school colleagues and transfer individual records when requested. A signature is requested upon receipt of the records. Pupils can often spend a day in the summer term visiting their selected school, meeting staff and getting to know the school. For our new nursery and reception pupils we hold a new intake evening. Pupils and their parents are invited to meet the school staff and visit their classrooms.

How will The Willows support my child when they are leaving this school, or when moving on to another class?

If your child is moving to another school:

- we will contact the new school's SENCo and ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that needs to be made for your child
- where possible we will support a visit to the new school in advance of the move
- we will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible

When moving classes in school:

- information will be passed on to the new class teacher in advance and in all cases a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher and other relevant school staff
- if your child would benefit from having a transition book, which outlines what to expect in their new class, this will be arranged for them

In Year 6:

- if your child has an EHC plan, the SENCo from the secondary school will be invited to attend the annual review or a transition meeting
- we will run transition sessions for your child to attend, which will support their understanding of transitions and any changes ahead

Where possible your child will visit their new school and in many cases staff from the new school will visit your child in this school.

We closely monitor children and young people's destination data. Many of our previous leavers have returned to talk to us about their new friends and school.

Complaints

It is hoped that any concerns or problems can be resolved amicably through discussions with the class teacher, senior colleagues or the Head Teacher if and when they arise. We take complaints seriously and will make every effort to investigate properly. The Head Teacher is willing to meet parents at mutually convenient times to discuss complaints should they arise. Should the matter not be resolved the second stage would involve the writing of a formal letter of complaint to the Governing Body, marked 'For the Attention of the Chair of Governors'. The third stage would be to send this formal letter of complaint to the Local Education Department of Stoke-on-Trent LA. Our Policy can be found on the school website under the Parents' section and in the Policy Folder.

For the year 2024-2025 there were 4 complaints.

Challenges this year

The challenges that have faced us for the past few years are still challenging us, and often adding more difficulties for pupils already struggling with social and emotional needs. We have seen a large increase in the number of pupils with speech and language difficulties. We have a high number of pupils on Speech and Language programmes. Too many young children appear to be occupied with tablets/gaming and consequently they are having less social interaction, thus causing these difficulties.

We are continuing our support for those who have been affected by COVID-19 and who need that extra catch-up. We have noticed a change in the behaviour and social skills of our pupils and so have increased our support, especially at break and lunch times when many find this unstructured time more difficult. Our lunch time Social Club runs three times a week, and we have increased the number of pupils able to access our Pastoral Team and resources. To support our school staff our deputy head, Mrs Beltran, has trained as a School Senior Mental Health Lead. She is a person who can be approached if anyone is struggling and needing support. Starting in the Spring Term 2026, Lauren Cummings, Mental Health Practitioner, from the Mental Health Support Team will be based at The Willows for one day each week supporting both children and families.

A particular continuing challenge for us is the ability to access external professional services. Whilst they are contactable by telephone the waiting time for a pupil to be seen has increased considerably, in some cases four-fold. This impacts greatly on what we are able to offer pupils waiting for appointments, how we can support them, and how we can move them forward. In addition, recent Local Authority changes to SEN documentation and funding for EHC Plans is having an impact, especially in terms of workload and the amount of money available to spend.

Further development

Overview

Our strategic plans for developing and enhancing SEN provision in our school next year include our 2025-2026 targets:

- Utilise the school's recent OFSTED Report and the anticipated White Paper on SEN to move the school forward
- Further develop the Sensory Circuit, and specific resources for this, within the school

- Work with the LA and the ILS Team on the development of the SEND Cluster Model within the Central Locality

In preparing this report we have included staff, parents and children and young people through informal discussion and consultation.

Relevant school policies underpinning this SEN Information Report include:

- Special Educational Needs Policy
- School Prospectus
- Admissions Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Statement and Information 2012 version 2
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Friendly Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- The Local Offer

Legislative Acts taken into account when compiling this report include:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018
- Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils 2012
- Equality Act: Advice for school leaders 2010
- The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019
- The Children Act 1989 and Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Education Act 1996
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2019

Contact details of support services for parents

SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)

Tel: (01782) 234701 or 234847

E-mail: iass@stoke.gov.uk

Web: www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Team

Tel: (01782) 235100 option 2

E-mail: ChAD.referrals@stoke.gov.uk

Web: www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

Advice and Access Team Tel: (01782) 232200 option 1, (01782) 235100 option 2

E-mail: CW@stoke.gov.uk

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board

Web: www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk

Special Educational Needs Assessment and Monitoring Service (SENMAS)

Tel: (01782) 231863

Email: SENMAS@stoke.gov.uk

Web: <https://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk>