



# Watermill School

## Special Educational Need Information Report/Policy

Report Information		
Latest Review information:	Summary of amendments	Date of next review:
Date: September 23; Name of reviewer/s: J May/A Clellow	Amended Clifton Emag to Insight. Amended IEP to pupil progress tracker Updated the Local offer link.	September 24
Date: May 25; Name of reviewer: Helen Clayton	Changes made to policy author to include new headteacher. Changes made to primary area of need from Cognition and Learning to Communication and Interaction. Changes made to the curriculum to include new EQUALS curriculum terminology and updated pathways to Explorers, Adventurers and Pathfinders. Changes made to assessment and evidencing.	Summer 26

Date; January 2026 Reviewer – Helen Clayton	Amendments made to the sentence structure and terminology used.  Reference to use of Insight and progress points removed from section 7.0 Removal of the Lodge intervention from section 9.0 Addition of Children's Choice Therapy to section 11	
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## **1.0 Introduction and Rationale**

At Watermill School we strive to support all children to enable them to achieve their full potential as we guide them through their learning journey. We are a specialist school for 3-16yrs which meets the needs of pupils across all 4 areas of need (as identified in a child's Education Health and Care Plan).

**Our School SENCO is; Emma Harrington, 01782 883737**

Quality first teaching is vital; however, for some children there are occasions when further additional support may be needed to help them to achieve their learning goals.

The school caters primarily for pupils with Communication and interaction needs, however, pupils may have secondary areas of need in one or more of the following:

- 1) Communication and Interaction
- 2) Cognition and Learning
- 3) Social, Emotional, Mental Health Difficulties
- 4) Physical and/or Sensory

## **2.0 Definitions**

Below is a glossary of the most common SEN terms:

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
BESD	Behavioural Emotional & Social Difficulties
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
HI	Hearing Impairment
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulty
PS	Physical, Sensory
SEMHD	Social, Emotional, Mental Health Difficulties
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs & Disability
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SLCN	Speech, Language, Communication Needs
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
VI	Visual Impairment

## **3.0 Identification**

A child has special educational needs and/or disability if s/he has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for reasonable adjustments and/or the need for special education provision to be made. Children may have a specific learning difficulty in one or more area, or their needs may be more generalised. A child's ability to learn in line with age related expectations may also involve problems in the following categories:

- 1) Communication and Interaction
- 2) Cognition and Learning
- 3) Social, Emotional, Mental Health Difficulties
- 4) Physical and/or Sensory

There may be a variety of reasons for a child's inability to progress, some of which may need help from other professional agencies to support with; it is our role as teachers to manage the needs which present themselves to us in the classroom. Knowledge of a child's background is always useful, and we must always take this into account. A child's EHCP is a vital document in recognising the needs of a child and how best to provide a safe, nurturing, academically challenging learning environment.

#### **4.0 Consultation**

Watermill School has regard to;

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents/carers
- the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
- the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

#### **5.0 Assessment, Review and Evaluation**

The Graduated Approach is used when exploring how to teach all children at Watermill school. By using this approach, we can ensure that everyone experiences Quality First Teaching.

The assess stage of the Graduated Approach can be seen in many ways dependent upon the learning pathway the child is accessing. It can take the form of:

- regular summative assessments and formative evaluations by teachers and support staff
- the use of standardised tests where appropriate
- discussions among staff in departmental meetings
- progress reports and pupil progress meetings
- parental meetings
- concerns expressed by pupils through discussion
- EHCP annual reviews
- recommendations or advice from external agencies.

#### **6.0 Support**

Pupils tend to remain at Watermill school until they are 16. A small minority might move back to mainstream before this time and others might move on to even more specialised provision if their need dictates this. The pupils are supported with all transitions when moving from one provision to another.

Preparation for Adulthood starts as soon as the children start their education journey with us, however this becomes more specific towards transition to post 16 provisions at the year 9 annual review process. The school's college link worker supports families in choosing the most appropriate provision for their child when leaving at year 11, supporting with initial visits, taster days, interviews, and the completion of paperwork.

#### **7.0 Approach to Teaching and Learning**

Watermill school utilises the EQUALS curriculum to ensure that children are at the forefront of their own learning.

The curriculum design prioritises the child by integrating four core aspects: an Engagement Profile with motivators, personalised learning plans, EHCP outcomes based on the four areas of SEND, and Preparing for Adulthood (PfA). These components form the foundation of the curriculum provision, ensuring that all educational strategies stem from them. Identifying learner characteristics—including play levels, communication skills, social skills, developmental progress, academic abilities, strengths, and challenges—facilitates appropriate placement within three learning pathways: Explorers, Adventurers and Pathfinders. Assessment and evidencing vary across each pathway with all pupils having PLG's (Personalised learning Goals) to track progress towards EHCP milestones. The Engagement Model profile is used consistently and evaluates pupils across five areas of engagement: Exploration, Realisation, Anticipation, Persistence, and Initiation. Some pupils may be able to access national statutory assessments. Our key stage 4 pupils can be assessed and given accreditation through Entry Level functional skills exams in maths and English.

Each pupil's education programme is planned by the class teacher and reviewed constantly. Adaptive teaching is used to meet the pupil's individual needs. This may include additional support by the teacher or teaching assistant in class. If a pupil has needs related to more specific areas of their education, identified interventions will be used to support them. The interventions will be regularly reviewed by all involved to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning.

Occasionally a pupil may need more specific support from an outside agency such as the Children's Therapy Team, Paediatrician, Speech and Language team etc. Referral forms are completed in conjunction with parents/carers. After a series of assessments, a programme of support is provided to the school and parents/carers. Teaching Assistants may be used effectively to work with the pupil in a 1-1 or small focus group to target more specific needs.

Where appropriate specialist equipment may be used to support the pupil in their learning and as a school, we are happy to discuss individual access requirements.

The environment is already adapted to meet the needs of pupils with physical and sensory needs, with the inclusion of a lift, overhead tracking for hoist systems and hygiene suites with changing beds and accessible toilets. Additional provision may be allocated after discussion with the class teacher and/or parents.

All staff at Watermill School have access to a well-planned CPD schedule to ensure that they have up to date knowledge and skills to enable them to support all learners effectively.

We evaluate the effectiveness of the provision made in the following ways:

- In school monitoring including learning walks and work scrutiny
- OCT Reviews and external scrutiny
- Assessment trackers
- EHCP review of Pupil outcomes/targets
- OFSTED visit
- Regular review of care plans, pupil progress trackers, behaviour plans etc.
- Quality assurance reviews internally and externally

## **8.0 Engagement**

The curriculum and its delivery ensure that all pupils can access and engage in everything that Watermill offers. School trips are planned by individual classes with their specific pupil needs in mind making them

accessible to all. Risk assessments are completed, and procedures are put in place to enable all children to participate. Please see our School's Accessibility Plan.

## **9.0 Pupil Wellbeing**

The school offers a wide variety of pastoral support for pupils who are encountering emotional difficulties, including in-class 1:1 or small group emotional wellbeing sessions, led by a qualified member of staff. All the staff who work with the children are on hand to support pupils with any concerns or worries that they might have.

More bespoke, individualised support can be offered such as bereavement counselling through the Dove service.

## **10.0 Medical Needs**

- If a pupil has a medical need, a detailed Care Plan is compiled in consultation with parents/carers and the school nurse. These are discussed with all staff who are involved with the pupil.
- All staff working with a pupil who has a specific medical need will be trained to recognise the symptoms of that need and to feel confident to administer any medical interventions as and when necessary.
- Where necessary and in agreement with parents/carers medicines are administered in school. A signed medication agreement is in place in line with the medication policy to ensure the safety of both child and staff member.

## **11.0 Multi-agency working**

Watermill School follow a multiagency approach and work in collaboration with outside agencies to seek more specialised expertise. The agencies used by the school can include:

- SENDS (Specialist advisors including Autism, Specific learning difficulties, Visually and hearing impaired)
- CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Social Services
- Children's Therapy Team (Speech & Language)
- Paediatricians and medical professionals (such as school nurses and physiotherapy teams)
- An Educational Psychologist
- Children's Choice Therapy (Occupational Therapy and Sensory Integration Specialist)

Watermill School staff alongside the Designated teacher, engage in the ePEP process as part of ensuring the above points meet the needs of our Pupils Looked After by the Local Authority.

## **12.0 Complaints (Please see in addition the school's complaints policy).**

Any complaint is dealt with sensitively and promptly.

1. The initial point of contact is the child's class teacher, this can be via either dojo, or an appointment made through the school reception.

2. Appointments may also be made with the Senior Leaders or Headteacher
3. If any person feels that their complaint has not been dealt with adequately by the school staff, they are able to contact the Chair of Governors, Mrs Amy Clelow via a sealed envelope at the school office.
4. In addition, the Local Education Authority provides a disagreement resolution service.
5. The LA also provides a parent partnership service (SENDIASS).

#### Local Offer

The local authority's website can be found at [www.stoke.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.stoke.gov.uk/localoffer)

If parents require any further support, please contact one of the following agencies;

SEND Information, Advice & Support Service (SENDIASS)

Tel: (01782) 234701 or 234847

E-mail: [iass@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:iass@stoke.gov.uk)

Web: [www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk](http://www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk)

Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board

Tel: (01782) 235100

Web: <http://www.safeguardingchildren.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/portal/>

Special Educational Needs Monitoring and Assessment Service (SENMAS)

Tel: (01782) 232740

Web: [Senmas@stoke.gov.uk](mailto:Senmas@stoke.gov.uk)

An updated list of the Local offer information can be found on our school website:

[www.watermillschool.co.uk/the-local-offer-sen/](http://www.watermillschool.co.uk/the-local-offer-sen/)