



Villa Real School
together we achieve

Special Educational Needs Policy 2025

Responsibility: Alex Morris

Date: January 2025

Signed & Adopted by the Governing Body:

Chair of Governors

Date: 20.01.25

Date to be reviewed: January 2026

This Policy has been written to reflect current legislation (below), other school policies and Villa Real School's SEN Information Report.

- *The Children and Families Act 2014*
- *Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015) (SENDCoP)*
- *Schools SEN Information Report Regulations 2015*

PHILOSOPHY

All stakeholders at Villa Real School acknowledge their shared responsibility for making appropriate provision for pupils/students with Special Educational Needs. We at Villa Real, set out this policy to help us to succeed with our principal aim of enabling every pupil/student to achieve his or her full potential and to become a valued member of the school and an active member of the wider community. We provide a caring, supportive learning environment in which pupils/students with additional needs can achieve success. We believe that there should be close consultation and partnership with the pupil/student's parent/carers; both the school and the home working jointly to meet the pupil/student's needs.

Our School is a thriving community that offers a personalised curriculum meeting the needs of individual pupils/students. We have high expectations of all our pupils/students providing them with the skills to gain academic, sporting, health, cultural and social experience – preparing them for life.

The staff are the school's greatest resource. They are caring, supportive and well qualified across all aspects of SEND. They work together as a team to provide a consistent learning environment and a highly structured curriculum that ensures pupils/students meet their true potential and are prepared for life. The school believes in a multi-disciplinary approach and has access to a wide range of talented professionals across different disciplines.

We have a strong belief that the best interests of the pupil/student must be a top priority in all things that we do. A pupil/student with a disability has a right to live a full life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community. As such, the education we offer must develop every pupil/student's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the pupil/student's respect for Human Rights, as well as respect for their parent/carers, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

Villa Real School was established to meet the needs of pupils/students who have an Education Health Care Plan. Villa Real School's catchment area is primarily the north west of the county although some pupils/students come from neighbouring areas and counties. Villa Real School caters for pupils/students aged two to nineteen years of age, who have Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties, and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. Many of the pupils/students also have additional learning needs including social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

The school meets the Disability Discrimination Act regulations. Pupils/students are admitted to the school upon the recommendation and request from County Durham's SEN Placement and Provision Service. Funding from the authority reflects the provision designation for the school and is based on individual need.

AIMS

The SEN Code of Practice 2015 is at the core of everything we do at Villa Real School.

All pupils/students are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- Achieve their best
- Become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- Make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

The school's provision in relation to curriculum, environment, resources, staffing structure, policies and staff development are focused on meeting the individual needs of the pupil/student as identified through their EHC Plan, advice from outside agencies and professionals and the subsequent REAL targets.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN CODE OF PRACTICE 2015)

A pupil/student or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A pupil/student of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

A pupil/student under compulsory school age has Special Educational Needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Educational inclusion is about equal opportunities, for all pupils/students, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, attainment and background. It ensures particular attention to the provision made for, and the achievement of different groups of pupils/students within a school. We are aware that specific groups of pupils/students are more likely to underachieve and/or suffer discriminatory practice than others within our society.

At Villa Real School we strive to create a sense of community and belonging for all our pupils/students. We have an inclusive ethos with high expectations and suitably challenging targets. We provide a highly personalised and appropriate broad and balanced curriculum for every pupil/student. We have a rigorous system of including outside agencies and health professionals in the educational provision for our students and actively encourage the full participation in parent/carers and the pupil/student in their educational journey. We appreciate fully, that to have the most impact on the lives of our pupils/students, we need to remove those barriers to learning, wherever possible.

Inclusion opportunities are available in a variety of ways for groups of pupils/students and individuals through our work with partner schools and

community links, such as work experience for the 6th Form students. We have a rigorous and plentiful enrichment curriculum, in which outside groups come in to work with our students, or individuals go out and about into the community.

We take seriously our legal duties regarding discrimination. The following statutory school policies and procedures are key tools which support us in increasing inclusive practice and should be considered alongside this policy: *Single Equality Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Anti-Bullying Policy, Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy.*

CURRICULUM ENTITLEMENT

Staff at Villa Real School have developed a curriculum model which is tailored to the ever changing and wide-ranging needs of its pupils/students and ensures that all pupils/students receive an innovative and exciting educational programme. We aim to make sure that all pupils/students receive the highest quality education. Our model incorporates personalised learning and a differentiated curriculum programme which not only provides consistency but offers scope for individual teachers to design and implement highly structured teaching programmes to meet the very specific educational needs of each pupil/student in their class. Subject coordinators ensure that there is progression in each subject area throughout the school.

The rationale driving Villa Real School's curriculum is one of learning opportunities which are personalised, relevant and challenging, providing the foundation for our pupils/students to become lifelong learners who will be active members in their community. The REAL curriculum intent is to meet individual need and ensure progress. It also provides guidance for achieving a balanced selection of appropriate teaching objectives across the curriculum areas which not only consider the age and ability of the pupil/student but also the nature and degree of difficulty. The curriculum is constantly evaluated to ensure it prepares pupils/students for the society we live in and for the years to come.

Our Pupils/students follow one of four pathways, dependent on age and ability. These pathways provide bespoke and personalised learning for all. We recognise that all our pupils/students are individuals with very specific learning needs. To this end we incorporate a range of different learning approaches to help meet their needs both at an individual level and within group settings.

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW

All pupil/students' needs are reviewed on an annual basis at the Statutory Annual Review of their EHC Plan. These reviews are person centred and pupils will be supported and provided scaffolds to attend. These meetings are attended by the pupil (where appropriate), their parent/carers, class teacher, SENCO and other professionals. The focus of the review is to discuss pupil progress, appropriateness and accuracy of the EHC Plan, the appropriateness of current provision and to set new outcomes for the year ahead.

Pupil voice is a key element to the EHCP annual review process, all pupils/students at Villa Real School have the opportunity and support to contribute to the annual review process. Most attend in person and share their views and aspirations for the future, whereas others are supported to prepare their views and aspirations and a member of staff would advocate for them during the annual review.

These reviews can be face to face or online dependent on parent or pupil request. School will make sure that as many professionals attend as possible but if they do not that DCC latest forms/reports are completed to capture professionals' views and recommendations.

We believe that data is extremely important in regard to academic progress and developing social skills. This data is captured and represented within the EHCP report along with analysis from the relevant stakeholders.

MONITORING PUPIL PROGRESS

Pupil progress is assessed using Early Years Developmental Journal, Engagement Model and BSquared assessment tools. Achievement is recorded electronically Throughout the year using BSquared and progress is reviewed and monitored by the Deputy Headteacher to ensure pupils/students are on track to make expected progress. Earwig is used to capture progress in a variety of multi-media formats alongside the review of REAL Targets.

The school use a variety of REAL assessment processes to capture progress in everyday skills e.g. toileting/eating etc.

Through this analysis the school can ensure that the curriculum, planning, teaching and support are effective in raising standards of achievement for all pupils/students. Subject co-ordinators have a role to monitor the progress in their subject area and create intervention programmes where appropriate. Please see Assessment Policy for full overview.

Parent/carers are invited to attend parent/carer's evenings, each term, to discuss their pupil/student's progress and contribute to the target setting process. Pupils/students are also supported to take part in setting and reviewing their targets.

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS

At Villa Real School each pupil/student have REAL Targets which are written in consultation with other professionals, parent/carers and the pupil/student themselves wherever possible. Targets are 'SMART' and should relate to the individual's learning needs and address any barriers to achievement. REAL Targets are reviewed each half term. They combine the many different targets our pupils/students have and advice from the many different professionals. These are the key planning tool for classroom staff in their approach to effective classroom practice.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PUPIL/STUDENT

Villa Real School recognises the importance of including pupils/students in the process of assessment, planning and monitoring. We employ a range of strategies in order to seek pupils'/students' views and involve them in reviewing and setting their own targets. Please see Pupil Voice overview. Where pupils/students are unable to contribute themselves, we use key workers to represent their views. Staff use Assessment for Learning strategies to enable pupils/students to be able to assess their own learning and think about how they can make improvements.

MOST ABLE STUDENTS

Pupils who have been identified as Most Able will have specific strategies and interventions appropriately planned by the class manager and overseen by Senior Management to ensure that their specific needs are met.

PROCEDURES FOR CONCERNS

If parent/carers have concerns regarding the provision made to meet their pupil/student's special needs they are encouraged in the first instance to discuss the issue with the class teacher, Headteacher or SENCO. If they do not feel satisfied with the outcome, they may seek advice from SEN Team at County Hall or at One Point. If a parent/carer has a formal complaint, they should utilise the School's Resolution Policy.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF

The Governing Body has an action plan which ensures that the needs of the school, as laid out in the School Improvement Plan, as well as individual professional development needs are met. Individual Development needs are assessed and reviewed through performance management procedures and individual training needs identified. Continuous Professional Development in SEN is supported by targeted in-service training and attendance on courses. We recognise and value the vast amount of knowledge and skills held by our own staff and strive to promote the use of peer collaboration as a means of staff development. The long-term well-being of the pupils/students is of paramount concern and have a detailed Training Schedule including Medical, Safeguarding, Moving and Handling. Villa Real have an active CPDL programme that ensure all staff becomes specialists and ongoing training is offered if needs of the pupils are new to the school. Many of these courses are certificated.

LINKS WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND SCHOOLS

Villa Real School believes that effective action on behalf of our pupils/students depends upon close co-operation between the school and other professionals. We work closely with agencies including Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physiotherapy Services, The Disabled Pupil/student and Families Team at Social Services, Educational Welfare, Educational Psychology Service and the Pupil/student Health Service. We also have links with several local and national organisations, which work on behalf of pupils/students with Special Educational Needs including The National Autistic Society.

We have strong links with agencies to provide training on certain specific issues, such as ELKLAN, NICE (National Institute of Conductive Education) and Visual Impairment. The aim is that specific and in-depth training will be given to school staff, who will then be able to deliver a bespoke package to our pupils/students, based on professional's recommendations and develop Champions in the School.

Villa Real School has a good working relationship with the other special schools in the county, the mainstream schools within the Consett cluster and the specialist post-19 provisions in the area. As a result, the transfer of pupils/students at the end of the 14-19 Provision, and where there is a need for a change in provision, is usually smooth and trouble-free.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENT/CARERS

Villa Real School strives to nurture relationships with parent/carers by frequent and appropriate communication. Parent/carers are invited to review meetings to discuss progress and to be involved in setting targets with appropriate intervention strategies to help the pupil/student both in school and at home. Information and links to external agencies are available to parent/carers via the school website, from the School and the SENCO. The school are sharing more information with parent/carers through special parent/carer events, such as a safeguarding update, newsletters, and homework. Parent/carers are invited to regular whole school events such as assemblies, sports days and fayres. We also hold specialist coffee mornings and information training days for parent/carers, who can come along and learn from each other, e.g. CE day, ASC day. We also seek views of parents for further communication.

EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF THE SEN POLICY

Villa Real School will seek the views of teachers, parent/carers, pupils/students and other agencies when judging and evaluating the effectiveness of the SEND policy. Pupil's achievements and progress data will be rigorously analysed to establish and demonstrate its effectiveness. The SENCO produces a robust and rigorous action plan yearly, which is reviewed termly. The results of the evaluation will be used identify and inform future aims and objectives which will then be addressed through the School Improvement Plan, and CPD planning made appropriately.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provision for the pupils/students at Villa Real School is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the Governing Body, the School's Headteacher and all other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities in meeting the needs of pupils/students at Villa Real School. However, 'the statutory duties remain with the Governing Body rather than with the school staff.'

The Governing Body:

- Should, in cooperation with the Headteacher, determine the school's general policy and approach to provision for all pupils/students, establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work
- Must report to parent/carers annually on the school's policy on SEN
- SEN Governor, Suzanne Bailey
- Ivan Jewell, CEIAG Governor

The Headteacher:

- Has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, and will keep the Governing Body informed

The SENCO:

- Is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the School's SEN policy
- Will co-ordinate additional support for pupils/students with SEN and liaise with their parent/carers, teachers and other professionals who are involved with them
- Will chair the Annual Reviews and act on any changes that come out of them
- Will be acutely aware the needs of the pupils/students and the best provision for them

Teachers:

- Are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils/students in their class, including where pupils/students access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff

HLTA:

- Monitor, assess, report and maintain records of pupils/students and their performance; working with the class teachers.

Enhanced Teaching Assistant:

- Make contributions to assessments, reviews and discussions on pupil's/student's achievements.

SA:

- Identify any issues witnessed to the class teacher.

All teaching and non-teaching staff should be involved in the development of the school's policy and be fully aware of the school's procedures for making SEN provision, and monitoring and reviewing that provision in line with the guidance in the Code.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

This policy will be reviewed by the SMT and Governing Body on an annual basis alongside the School Information Report.

SEN Information will be published on the school's website as part of the SEND Local Offer.

Appendix - School Council views re SEN Policy and Villa Real School

"I love school its great! I like doing my schoolwork, it's hard but I try my best with help off the teachers."

"My favourite thing in school is dinner time and playtime when I can play games with my friends."

"I love doing Science I learn lots of interesting facts. We have lots of time using laptops. I enjoy going out into the community to visit the library, choosing a book and bringing it back to school."

"Staff are always there to help me when I get stuck with my work but can be a bit bossy! They help me with my words when I can't get them out. They help me with my medicine."

"If I could change anything around school it would be to have more outdoor equipment and more space."

"I enjoy doing homework and learning how to read, write and have good manners."