

**CITY OF ROCHESTER SCHOOL
SEN POLICY**

This policy, which applies to the whole school, and upon request a copy (which can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required) may be obtained from the School Office.

In the City of Rochester School, the term 'staff' is inclusive of all staff and it also applies to students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers, the Trustees and Board of Trustees.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Headteacher, being responsible for the day to day organisation and running of the school.
- The Headteacher will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date shown below, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so requires. This discussion will be formally documented in writing. Any deficiencies or weaknesses recognised in arrangements or procedures will be remedied immediately and without delay.

Signed:



Alicja Emmett
Headteacher

Date Reviewed: March 2025
Date of Next Review: March 2026
Version No. 4

This policy will be reviewed no later than March 2025, or earlier if changes in legislation, regulatory requirements or best practice guidelines so require.

Table of Contents

1. Aims	1
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. Definitions.....	3
4. Roles and responsibilities	4
5. SEN Information Report.....	6
6. Links with other policies and documents	9

1. Aims

Our SEN policy and information report aims to:

Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN)

Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEN The Vision,

Aims and Values are detailed below:

Vision

Our vision and commitment at City of Rochester School is for pupils to develop self-confidence, independence and resilience through a rich, engaging and experiential curriculum. This will provide the skills, life experiences and qualifications they need to participate successfully in wider society.

Aim

Our highly experienced and dedicated team provides an ambitious curriculum that nurtures and challenges our pupils, including working with external partners to enhance the learning experience. Our aim is for pupils to be successful at City of Rochester School and for them to be equipped with the skills they need to lead purposeful and productive lives when they leave us.

We work collaboratively with families as an integral part of our service, recognising their central role in ensuring their children thrive at school.

Values

City of Rochester School values focus on our motto of “Confidence. Resilience. Success.”

- **Confidence** – we value inspirational, aspirational and experiential learning inside and outside the classroom to develop pupils’ confidence.
- **Resilience** – we value participative learning that develops pupils’ thinking and social skills, enabling them to understand their autism, face and overcome challenges and to develop resilience for life.
- **Success** – we value learning outcomes that are holistic and which measure and celebrate pupils’ success at school and improve their life chances.

All our pupils are unique and have different strengths. They are all individually assessed and individual learning and support programmes are put in place which identify additional support to enable pupils to access the curriculum and realise their full potential.

We currently meet the needs of pupils aged 5 to 18 who have a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder/Condition (ASD/C). All our young people have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which identifies their diagnosed learning difficulties/disabilities and range of barriers to their learning. Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), Speech and Language Disorders, Sensory Processing Disorders, Tourette’s Syndrome, Global Developmental Delay (GDD), and Social Communication and Interaction Difficulties. This list is not exhaustive and may also include other neurodevelopmental, cognitive, and learning differences that require tailored support.

City of Rochester School works with Medway and Kent Local Authorities and all pupils who attend this school are referred via these authorities. Details below:

Medway County Council:

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TR
Tel: 01634 331120

Kent County Council:

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team
Joynes House
New Road
Gravesend
Kent DA11 0AT
03000 413936

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy and information report is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Code of Practice](#) and the following legislation:

[Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities

[The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the SEN information report. This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other pupils. However due to the nature of our pupils, providing for diverse special needs is our usual way of working at the school.

- City of Rochester School is a positive learning environment, and provides pupils with the structures, boundaries and routines that helps pupils to manage both their SEN as well as ongoing academic requirements. We also understand that pupils with specific diagnosis' will present with different behaviours so we take a positive approach to supporting behaviour. We have high expectations for behaviour and have a reward system in place that both celebrates successes, but also results in compliance with school expectations. Within these systems, pupils can work on building his self-confidence and self-esteem as well skills in social interaction.
- City of Rochester School has an appropriate staff to student ratio and has small class groups (no more than six or seven), so there is scope for targeted support and intervention throughout the school day. The facilitation of learning breaks, break-out/quiet/chill out areas, as well as independent work stations and other such provisions are made specifically for a student with the diagnosis of ASD in mind.
- The pupils at City of Rochester School all have access to a laptop which can be utilised in different ways to help with their learning needs.
- The specialist curriculum teachers are highly trained in SEN. The curriculum is personalised and bespoke to the individual pupil, with an emphasis on core subjects and key skills. Teachers use flexible teaching strategies and assessments that take the needs of individuals into account. We focus on both academic curriculum as well as a social and life skills curriculum which is tailored to the needs of the pupil.
- All pupils have access to nationally recognised accredited programmes. At KS4 (or before) pupils are offered GCSE and/or entry level courses/BTEC Vocational courses and the examinations process is managed onsite.
- All pupils have access to an independent careers advisor and a full careers programme, aligned with the Gatsby Benchmarks.
- Pupils can continue their studies into sixth form and we have made links with different establishments to maximise this provision. Pupils are given the option of re-sitting GCSEs, sitting new GCSEs or moving on to

further education, and a bespoke programme is created with needs and aspirations of the individual in mind. This is planned for in person centred planning meetings (PCP).

- A team of SEN and ASD specialists has been instrumental in developing our bespoke curriculum, ensuring it is tailored to meet the diverse needs of children with special educational needs. At City of Rochester School, our curriculum is highly practical and experiential, based on the belief that pupils learn best through hands-on experiences and visual learning. Our vision is to create an immersive learning environment where students actively engage with their education. To achieve this, we collaborate with a range of local external partners, ensuring that every pupil has access to a curriculum designed specifically to support their individual learning journey.
- Evidence based interventions – for example in literacy and numeracy are used to support pupil progress.
- A wrap around therapy team is fully integrated in school and supports the academic, as well as social/emotional progress of pupils.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Board of Trustees are responsible for:

- Ensuring local procedures are in place to effectively implement this policy within the school.
- To keep themselves informed through regular meetings with staff and visits to the school.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the policy and advise of any necessary amendments.
- To ensure that any issue that may be perceived as a potential reputational risk is identified and addressed with the wider Board of Trustees.

4.2 The Headteacher is alicia.emmett@cityofrochesterschool.org. 01634 570706. She is responsible for:

- Ensuring all relevant staff are aware of this policy, receive appropriate professional development and local procedures are followed.
- All staff are responsible for providing all pupils with appropriate support and challenge to maximise their learning and independence through appropriate adaptations to their curriculum to meet individual needs.

The SENCO is Sophie Hatcher - sophie.hatcher@cityofrochesterschool.org - 01634 570706

4.3 The SENCO will:

be responsible for leading and coordinating the provision for all pupils, ensuring their needs are met through effective support, curriculum adaptations, and collaboration with staff, families, and external professionals.

Key Responsibilities:

- Work in partnership with teaching staff, support staff, and the Board of Trustees to shape the school's SEN policy and strategic development.
- Oversee the development, implementation, and review of EHCPs (Education, Health, and Care Plans), ensuring each student receives the appropriate support.
- Ensure the curriculum is accessible, adaptable, and tailored to meet the needs of autistic learners.
- Take overall responsibility for the progress, wellbeing, and provision of students with additional needs.
- Collaborate with parents and carers, supporting them in ensuring their child attends school regularly and putting necessary interventions in place when needed.
- Guide teachers on adaptive teaching techniques and ASD-friendly teaching strategies, including visual supports, structured routines, sensory adaptations, and communication aids.
- Foster autism-friendly learning environments that promote self-regulation and engagement.

- Organise and oversee personalised interventions, such as social skills development, emotional regulation programs, and tailored learning support.
- Work closely with therapists and support staff to ensure effective interventions are delivered consistently across the school.
- Lead or arrange ongoing professional development to equip staff with the skills and knowledge to support autistic learners effectively.
- Promote understanding of neurodiversity, sensory processing needs, and behaviour as a form of communication among staff.
- Ensure the curriculum is highly visual, practical, and tailored to suit the individual learning needs of students.
- Act as the main point of contact for parents and carers, ensuring they are actively involved in their child's education and progress.
- Work collaboratively with speech and language therapists (SALT), occupational therapists (OT), educational psychologists, and other professionals to provide holistic support for students.
- Stay up to date with SEND legislation, policies, and best practices, ensuring compliance with all statutory requirements.
- Support student transitions at key points, including admission, class changes, and progression to post-16 education.

4.2 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with Learning Support Specialists and other specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the wider staff team and integrated therapies to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensure that Pupil Progress Trackers are consistently updated to monitor students' progress against their EHCP targets. Additionally, maintain up-to-date Pupil Flight Paths, roadmaps, and pupil profiles. These essential documents outline the provision in place for each pupil, the rationale behind it, and summarise the impact of our holistic approaches on their progress.
- Ensuring that assessments are carried out at appropriate points. Formal assessments are carried out at the beginning and end of every year in reading, writing and mathematics. On-going assessments are carried out against national curriculum/qualification benchmarks.

4.3 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

We will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents when identifying whether they need special educational provision. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account the parents' aspirations
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are
- An integration plan and assessment report is provided for the pupil, parents and staff to enable provision to be mapped accordingly.
- Parents are involved in regular reviews of pupil progress
- End of term reports are sent to parents/carers 3 times per year which outlines how pupils are progressing in school.

4.4 Assessing and reviewing pupils' progress towards outcomes

We follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

The class or subject teacher works with professionals within the school and use the information contained within and that sits alongside the pupil EHCP to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- Bespoke and relevant SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) targets that align with EHCPs (Education, Health, and Care Plans).
- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
- The tracking of progress against SCERTS targets
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- Continual review of progress via the Pupil Progress Tracker and Pupil Flight Path documents
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data (where available)
- The views, aspirations and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Information and advice from educational professionals
- Advice from external support services, if relevant. The assessment will be reviewed regularly.

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

5. SEN Information Report

Supporting pupils moving between phases and preparing for adulthood

We will share information with the school, college, or other setting the pupil is moving to/transitioning to. We will agree with parents and pupils which information will be shared as part of this. Transition describes the movement that takes place from one place to the next, and in particular from one year group, key stage or setting to the next including post-school.

At City of Rochester School we recognise the importance of managing transition. This may be a stressful time for pupils, parents and carers, particularly as pupils move between key stages and beyond school age. We work hard to counter the potential for stress by systematically cooperating and engaging with all parties concerned.

Our aim is that pupils experience a smooth transition into school, from one class (or key stage) to another, or from school to a placement so that the pace and quality of learning and support are maintained to ensure the pupils continue to make progress and realise their potential.

Examples of how we manage and support transitions includes:

- Induction and taster days at their new provision
- Create personalised transition plans
- The use of visual aids (such as photographs) to prepare pupils for a new environment
- Taster days in their new class or key stage
- Visits to work placements/colleges
- Parent liaison through our Pupil Wellbeing Coordinator and/or SENCO

Preparing for Adulthood (Post-16, Employment, Independent Living)

- We Teach daily living skills (budgeting, cooking, travel training, self-care).

- We encourage participation in work experience, volunteering, or enterprise projects.
- We provide personal development programs focusing on confidence and resilience.
- Pupils are offered high-quality careers education with access to careers advisors and local employers.
- Pupils are introduced to apprenticeships, further education, and employment options.
- We arrange college visits, open days, and transition support for post-16 education.
- We teach self-advocacy skills so pupils can express their needs in new environments.
- We offer counselling or pastoral support to manage transition-related stress.

5.1 Expertise and training of staff

Our Headteacher, Alicja Emmett, has many years' experience of leading and working in special schools. She has qualified teacher status and has achieved the National Professional Qualification in Headship (NPQH) as well as a Post Graduate Certificate in Autism (PGCert Autism).

Our SENCO, Sophie Hatcher, has many years' experience of leading and working in special schools. She has qualified teacher status, the National Professional Qualification for leading teacher development and has achieved the NASENCo qualification.

We have a team of subject specialist teachers who all have qualified teacher status and/or a degree relating to their subject. Most have had experience teaching with pupils with Autism and a wide range of SEN needs

We have a team of teaching assistants, specialist tutors and higher level teaching assistants (HLTAs) who are trained to support and deliver SEN provision.

City of Rochester School has an on-going staff training and development programme and this ensures that all staff have the knowledge and skills to work effectively with pupils with ASD and other complex needs. Training includes (but is not limited to): phonics, subject specialisms, SCERTS, safeguarding, autism awareness, fluency and precision teaching, emotional regulation, TEACCHH, occupational therapy, trauma, H&S, speech and language interventions etc.

We use specialist staff for Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language, Play Therapy,-Counselling and other therapies that form part of our curriculum offer.

Members of the Board of Trustees have previously worked as teachers across secondary and primary sectors and are specialists in ASD. Another is an experienced ex-headteacher and is a current practicing Ofsted Team Inspector for Schools. In addition, the school has a Parental Advisory Group that meet half-termly. Feedback from this group is made to the Board and discussed at Board Meetings. The Chair of Trustees is: Kirstine Boon and she can be contacted at kirstine.boon@cityofrochesterschool.org

5.2 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Reviewing pupils' individual progress towards their goals each term
- Conducting regular formal assessments (standardised tests, teacher assessments).
- Observing classroom practice to ensure that SEN strategies are being implemented effectively.
- Pupil progress meetings that include evaluating access to resources, support staff, and reasonable adjustments.
- Reviewing the impact of interventions
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Parental Advisory Group
- Using parental questionnaires
- Using staff questionnaires to inform staff CPD

- Monitoring by the Headteacher and wider SLT
- Trustee Monitoring – holding the Headteacher to account
- Using provision maps to measure progress – Pupil Flight Paths and Pupil Progress Trackers
- Holding annual reviews for all pupils, with internal updates
- Regularly reviewing policies and adapting provision based on new research and feedback.

5.3 Support for improving emotional and social development

We provide support for pupils to improve their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils participate in the half-termly School Council which ensures pupils have a voice in their school and can contribute to its development
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.
- We foster a nurturing school culture where pupils feel safe, valued, and respected.
- We encourage participation in team-based activities like sports, drama and experiential learning.
- We ensure pupils have access to a **trusted adult**, such as a keyworker, SENCO, or welfare lead.
- Offer school counselling or mental health support for pupils with additional emotional needs.
- The PSHE curriculum provides opportunities for social and emotional development
- Social Stories, Comic Strip Stories/Conversations are used to support pupils understanding of the world around them
- We teach pupils how to identify and express emotions through emotion check-ins and discussions. Modelling calming techniques such as mindfulness, breathing exercises, or sensory breaks and provide self-regulation tools (e.g., fidget toys, quiet spaces, weighted blankets).
- All pupils access a programme called the Contented Child which supports their emotional regulation
- We offer small group or one-to-one interventions (e.g., social skills groups, friendship clubs) and well as a peer mentor programme.
- We track behavioural improvements and engagement in social activities using CPOMS.
- Through our 360-review programme we involve parents and carers in supporting social and emotional development at home.
- The school has an annual programme of community engagement including working with local and national charities to fundraise
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in community/fundraising activities – such as Red Nose Day
- Wrap around therapy team to support pupils' access to learning programmes

5.4 Working with other agencies

Depending on the nature of the issue, the school works in partnership with the following professionals (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Family Support Services – such as Family Solutions (Early Help)
- The Local Authority
- Police
- Housing
- NELFT
- Local Authority Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy Teams and Educational Psychology
- GPs
- Targeted drug and alcohol information services
- Safeguarding teams at Medway and Kent Local Authorities
- Youth Crime Preventative Services

The strategies and targets set at school are shared with parents through annual review meetings, individual pupil progress meetings (where appropriate) and through the end of term report

All information from onsite and outside professionals will be discussed with you, with the person involved directly, or where this is not possible, in a report.

5.5 Complaints

Parents have the following rights of redress, should the school, Trustees, or LA fail in its duty to provide, or if the parent disagrees with a decision or feels that there is discriminatory practice.

Complaints about provision in our school should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

6. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to:

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Positive Behaviour Support Policy

Attendance & Children Missing from Education Policy

Equalities Policy

First Aid and Administering Medicine Policy

Complaints Procedure for Parents Policy

Collaborative Curriculum Policy

Admissions policy

Therapy policy

SCERTS, sensory and communication policy

Linking to National Guidance:

- The Children and Families Act (2014):
- The Equality Act (2010):
- Ofsted Framework
- DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years':
- DfE (2017) 'Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions':
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children':
- DfE (2018) 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision in Schools':
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2024)
- Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010: