



SEND Policy & Information Report

Date	December 2025
Approved By	Full Governing Body
Date Approved	15/12/25
Review Date	December 2026
Staff role responsible for review	Deputy Headteacher

This policy applies to all stakeholders within Ivel Valley School & College



Introduction

Ivel Valley School and College is an area special school and college in Central Bedfordshire which provides specialist educational provision for pupils aged from 3 to 19. All pupils at Ivel Valley all have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place before joining us. All of our pupils have learning disabilities; these might be moderate, severe or profound & multiple. Many pupils have additional special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), such as autism, cerebral palsy, sensory impairments, or Down's syndrome.

Ivel Valley retained an Ofsted judgement of 'Good' following an ungraded inspection September 2023, with a recommendation that a graded inspection might find the provision to be outstanding (before the decision to remove overall grades). The report noted that our pupils "become confident and happy learners" and that "there is no ceiling placed on what they do or achieve".

Ivel Valley is split across two main sites: the school site and the college site, with the college providing education for young people in Key Stage 5.

The purpose of this policy

Effective provision for pupils with SEND is at the heart of all of our policies and procedures. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state our vision, values and broader aims for pupils with SEND, and to share information about what this looks like for our pupils on a day-to-day basis.

How does Ivel Valley provide an inclusive environment?

Our classes are determined by children's age, creating inclusive mixed ability classes where pupils are encouraged to socialise, communicate and learn with their peers. We have high levels of expectations for all our children and young people and we aim to fully extend their academic and social development. Enhanced levels of staffing and individualised learning programmes ensure both the learning and social needs of each individual are met within their class. Each pupil receives support matched to their own SEND; this will vary across each day and throughout their time in our school, as the level of support is directly related to their needs and circumstances.

All of our pupils follow the same curriculum, working at the stage appropriate for them. All pupils participate in the curriculum and off-site activities. The extent to which a young person participates and the levels of support they receive will vary between each young person and each across time, but we differentiate activities and expectations to enable all pupils to take part.

We believe in the moral as well as the legal entitlement of all pupils and staff to have equality of access to teaching, learning, resources and opportunities, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation - please see equality information & objectives policy. In all activities, positive attitudes towards and respect for difference, diversity and individuality will be promoted. Resources and subject plans are differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils and will reflect and celebrate worldwide cultures as well as those of the local community.

We have school & college councils and conduct annual pupil surveys to encourage pupils to actively



practice democracy and to feel able to have their say about what matters to them.

Ivel Valley school is a flagship school for inclusion and holds 'flagship status' with the Inclusion Quality Mark. This is the highest level of award from the IQM and recognises Ivel Valley's commitment to inclusion.

We are currently waiting for a new school building which will allow us to better meet the accessibility needs of our pupils. We make our current building accessible by ensuring that the site is safe and secure, installing overhead tracking (or access to mobile hoists) where needed, and ensuring that pupils have access to accessible personal care facilities.

Who supports pupils at Ivel Valley?

Staff have a broad range of expertise; all classes are led by a qualified teacher. They are able to access support from a highly experienced extended leadership team, with expertise in key areas of learning. Teachers are supported by a high number of experienced and enthusiastic Teaching Assistants. Staff work in Key Stage teams, with daily support and oversight from an experienced Key Stage Leader.

Pupils also build supportive relationships with staff in the admin, site and catering teams – interviews for every single post at Ivel Valley involve spending time with pupils.

All staff receive a comprehensive induction and ongoing training in meeting the needs of pupils with complex learning difficulties, and staff have access to training resources online.

In addition to more specialist curriculum training, all staff receive mandatory annual safeguarding training. We endeavour to train as many class-based staff in Team Teach as possible, which is based in positive behaviour support, but also teaches staff how to safely support pupils who are feeling dysregulated and consequently presenting with unsafe behaviours. Many staff have also been trained in Moving & Handling, Signalong, First Aid, Food Hygiene, MOVE and MIDAS, amongst others. We work with the special school nursing team to ensure that staff have access to the correct medical training to meet pupils' health needs, such as administration of medication training.

Ivel Valley benefits from having its own trainers in Moving & Handling, MOVE, Signalong, Safeguarding, and Team Teach, meaning that staff can receive ongoing advice and support.

We have a strong programme of continuing professional development for our teachers, drawing on both internal and external specialists, consistently building their skills and knowledge.

All personal care needs are met by each class team, with particular support from a strong team of Health & Care Assistants, and we have an Intimate Care policy in place to offer staff guidance and to establish expectations, with a significant focus on dignity and consent.

Ivel Valley has excellent non-class-based support teams, who work alongside class staff to enable the best possible outcomes for pupils. These teams include: a Family Support team who work directly to support parents/carers and provide invaluable wellbeing support for pupils; a Communication Support team, including a directly-employed Speech & Language Therapist, who ensure that there is an excellent universal communication offer in all classrooms; a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team led by an Assistant Headteacher with a PBS responsibility, who work with staff and families to implement highly personalised PBS strategies for pupils; and a Preparing for Adulthood team, which comprises a Careers



Practitioner and Transitions Coordinator, who mainly work with our college students to ensure that their future plans and ambitions can be realised as best as possible.

We work very closely with a wide range of professionals from other settings whose advice is highly valued by staff and we work as multi-professional teams to ensure the best outcomes for the young people. Some allocation of therapeutic support falls under criteria set down by the NHS and is very much needs-led.

These professionals include:

The Children with Disabilities social care team	Physiotherapists
Early Help professionals	CAMHS practitioners
Adult social care teams, such as the Young Adult and Independent Living Team (YAaIL)	Hearing Impairment teachers
Special needs nurses and nursery nurses	Visual Impairment teachers
Community paediatricians	Music therapists
Dieticians	Educational Psychologists
Speech and Language Therapists (SALT)	Attendance Officers
Occupational Therapists (OT)	SEND Officers

Ivel Valley also works closely with Maythorn, a residential home operated by Central Bedfordshire Council which is co-located with our college site and provides both long term and shared care accommodation and short breaks.

Ivel Valley is led by a team of dedicated governors. The Governing Body works with the senior leaders in the strategic development of the school and college. They support the Headteacher and staff as well as offering constructive challenge, ensuring that Ivel Valley School and College achieves the very best it can for all students.

Ivel Valley is commissioned to provide an outreach service. Our dedicated outreach team works collaboratively with mainstream schools and alternative resource provisions in Central Bedfordshire to build capacity and confidence in meeting the needs of a wider range of children and young people with SEND.

How does Ivel Valley match its curriculum to pupils' needs?

Our curriculum has been developed collaboratively by Ivel Valley staff with support from external experts to enable all pupils to access each subject in a meaningful and purposeful way. It is based on the Early Years Framework and National Curriculum and is rich in opportunities and experiences to ensure lifelong learning. The 'golden thread' of our curriculum is to prepare our pupils effectively for adulthood and we are committed to 'making every moment count'. We have a dedicated Lead Practitioner for Curriculum, who is part of the SLT and works with Area of Learning leads to ensure that the curriculum is rich, well-reasoned, appropriately sequenced and meets the needs of all pupils working at all levels. There is more information about provision aligned to the areas of learning identified in the SEND Code of Practice in Appendix One.

Every pupil has a Personalised Learning Plan, which has short term targets based on their EHCP outcomes. They are all assessed individually against both these targets and the Ivel Valley curriculum, and teachers



use this information to inform their planning.

We receive advice and guidance from therapists and specialist teachers to ensure that we are using the right specialist equipment and aids for pupils that need it, to ensure that they are able to access the curriculum. We have lots of in-house specialism and support available, including a specialist teacher for pupils with complex learning disabilities, a MOVE co-ordinator, Team Teach tutors, a Positive Behaviour Support lead practitioner, and a sensory integration lead, amongst others.

We are highly committed to the personal development of our pupils: we teach using a holistic approach with life skills integrated throughout to help pupils learn as part of a group as well as individually. Pupils have the opportunity to generalise and transfer such skills to other settings in the school/college and out in the community. As so many of our pupils access school or college via local authority transport, there are reduced opportunities for after school enrichment opportunities. Therefore, we work hard to ensure our curriculum is broad, vibrant and enriching, with opportunities such as Forest School, special whole school events, a wide variety of accessible competitive sports activities, trips to local provisions (such as shops, libraries and parks), Duke of Edinburgh and other exciting educational visits. The college benefits from an accessible food tech room, a gym, an enterprise room and spaces to practise key life skills. We have a specialist music teacher, who delivers whole-class lessons and small-group interventions across the school. We have a small After School Club to provide wraparound care three days a week.

How does Ivel Valley assess and review the progress and needs of pupils?

As all our pupils have learning difficulties as well as associated SEND, it is to be expected that they will be working outside their age-related levels as they progress through Ivel Valley.

Pupils' EHCPs describe their individual needs and identified outcomes to work towards. These plans are reviewed yearly in an Annual Review meeting, which is attended by family members, Ivel Valley staff and other relevant professionals where possible. Progress is celebrated and both long-term and short-term outcomes are reviewed. Any additional needs or provision required are noted and recommended to the local authority's EHC team. We encourage and support pupils to attend their Annual Review meetings wherever appropriate; if they are unable to attend, we ensure that their voice is represented through a pupil views document, or by sharing photos or videos.

As all classes have enhanced staffing ratios (relative to a mainstream setting), teachers are able to quickly identify any requirements for additional support on an ongoing basis throughout the year and will discuss these with senior leaders and parents/carers. On a daily basis, the class teacher determines the level of support for individual young person from within the class team. When a young person's SEND circumstances, health requirements or complex learning needs indicate that additional support may be required, discussions are held between families, the class teacher and senior leaders to determine what this might be. Typically, this support continues to be provided from within the class team due to our enhanced staffing ratios, but it might be identified that the young person might require support from beyond the class team, or a specific type of intervention. This is where multi-professional discussion is beneficial. If the evidence suggests that even higher levels of support may be beneficial, this is agreed by senior leaders if the resource is provided from within the school; for a small number of pupils, we request funding for additional support from the Local Authority.



Assessments are made on a regular basis in every classroom, and the class teacher is responsible for maintaining and updating records for pupils in their class. We use an app called Evidence for Learning, which allows staff to record observations, photos and video, against both the Ivel Valley curriculum and pupils' individual targets. Teachers use this assessment to plan for future learning and progression, and data is monitored by senior leaders, who are able to support teachers to identify interventions to help individuals who are not making expected progress.

How does Ivel Valley work with families?

Ivel Valley highly values communication with families and recognises the enhanced importance of collaborative working for young people with SEND.

Class Dojo is used to help keep families of pupils informed about the school day, and we encourage families to let class teachers know if there is any specific information that they require on a daily basis in order to meet their child's needs. How information is shared looks slightly different depending on the Key Stage that pupils are in. Families can use Dojo to contact members of the SLT and other relevant staff. We also use Dojo to share relevant information, such as upcoming Ivel Valley events, reminders about processes, SEND-specific local events or key safeguarding information, particularly around online safety. Alongside Dojo, we use a platform called ParentMail; it has some useful functions that Dojo doesn't have, including enabling families to make payments and complete forms, such as reporting absence or responding to information about trips.

Pupils' class teachers are the first point of contact for any communication parents/carers may wish to make on a daily basis.

Families can download the Evidence for Learning app discussed above at home, enabling us to share learning journeys with families, which we do on a half-termly basis.

We hold two consultation evenings across the year; annual review meetings also provide an important opportunity to discuss feedback and review individual targets. Families with any concerns are welcome to contact teachers to have discussions outside of these structured sessions.

Our non-class-based support teams work closely with families, and will often arrange meetings to discuss specific circumstances, particularly the Family Support team, Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team and Preparing for Adulthood team. The Family Support team encourage families to contact them with any concerns that aren't directly related to education; they can either offer support, or signpost families accordingly.

If families aren't sure who to talk to about an issue, they can contact the main office, who can direct them to the right person.

How does Ivel Valley support pupils with their communication?

A total communication approach is used throughout Ivel Valley; communication & language is a prime area of our curriculum. We have a commitment to building signing competence across the setting and



support this with signing videos on our websites, 'sign of the week' in staff briefings and pupil assemblies, and 'sing and sign' sessions.

Our Communication Support team – which includes a qualified Speech & Language Therapist (SaLT) – carry out audits and work with staff to ensure that classroom environments are communication-friendly and that appropriate visual supports are available and used. We use the framework SCERTS to shape our understanding of pupils' communication needs – this stands for Social Communication, Emotional Regulation and Transactional Supports.

As well as our in-house SaLT, we work with NHS SaLTs, who offer pupil-specific advice and set targets, particularly for pupils who use AAC (alternative and augmentative communication), such as communication boards, PECS (picture exchange communication system) and PODD books (pragmatic organisation, dynamic display). Speech and Language Therapists helped us to develop our curriculum and most pupils will also have individual learning outcomes for communication, which are discussed and agreed during their annual reviews.

How does Ivel Valley support pupils with their wellbeing?

At Ivel Valley, we recognise wellbeing and emotional health is a key area of learning. Class teachers plan for the holistic development of each young person in their class, using their detailed knowledge of each individual to promote their confidence and self-esteem. The enhanced staffing levels enable class teams to allocate additional time as required to support the emotional wellbeing of individual pupils. Our annual pupil survey is an important tool for ensuring that we understand how our pupils are feeling and what matters to them; they consistently tell us that they feel safe at school and college.

Safeguarding is of utmost importance at Ivel Valley. All of our pupils – regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and age – have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse. Our whole staff team work alongside families and other professionals to create a strong culture of safeguarding, where pupils feel valued, respected and listened to. We recognise that our pupils' SEND makes them more vulnerable, and therefore our safeguarding practice needs to be particularly thoughtful and robust. We work hard to help our pupils understand how they can share concerns, if they want and are able to. Every classroom has an accessible safeguarding policy displayed and we are really dedicated to building positive, supportive relationships. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) works to build the knowledge and skills of staff and to create a proactive culture of safeguarding across the school and college.

We recognise the importance of friendships for our pupils and develop opportunities for them to nurture these friendships and to build their interaction skills and confidence. Our Ofsted report recognised that "pupils understand how to treat one another with respect and support one another". We work with a trauma-informed approach and use Zones of Regulation across the school and college to encourage pupils to build up strategies to manage their own wellbeing.

We have a trained Senior Mental Health Lead, whose job purpose is to develop and oversee the whole-school/college approach to mental health and wellbeing, including support for pupils and staff. The Family Support, PBS and Communication Support teams offer direct interventions with pupils regarding wellbeing, such as weekly 'check-ins', social thinking groups and Forest School intervention sessions. A small number of pupils access music therapy, delivered by specialists from Music Therapy



Bedfordshire.

We have fortnightly 'neurodiversity chat groups' on both our school and college site. Pupils who chose to attend get the chance to explore and learn about different types of SEND as well as their own, with a focus on being neuroaffirmative.

How does Ivel Valley support pupils with their behaviour?

At Ivel Valley, we use a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach. These are our principles of Positive Behaviour Support:

1. All behaviours happen for a reason and it is our responsibility to ensure the needs of the pupils are met.
2. The PBS approach is data led and enables us to identify potential causes or triggers of behaviours of challenge or concern.
3. The assessment, development and implementation of PBS plans are carried out in partnership with our pupils and all those involved with them.
4. The strategies developed are designed to increase quality of life for the individual and teach skills to replace behaviours of concern.
5. We have an Assistant Headteacher leading on PBS who works in partnership to provide training, support and guidance to ensure consistent implementation.
6. PBS plans will be monitored, evaluated and where necessary changed to support the individual's needs.

Our PBS lead is supported by a team of PBS practitioners who work with staff, families and relevant professionals to help complete observations, identify interventions and develop shared plans that support the young person in a positive and proactive way. Where appropriate, they will work jointly with staff with specialisms within Ivel Valley, such as the Family Support team, Speech & Language Therapist or sensory integration lead, to ensure that pupils' needs are considered as holistically as possible. Our PBS lead works closely with the CAMHS neurodevelopmental team and can access support through ongoing consultations.

What does transition look like at Ivel Valley?

Once a place at Ivel Valley has been confirmed by the EHC team, Ivel Valley work with the family to arrange an appropriate transition package, based on the needs of that individual young person. The Assistant Headteacher who oversees admissions will work collaboratively with the family and the current setting. Depending on when the place is offered, this won't always be organised straight away, but close to the young person's start date. Transition booklets and information will be sent out in the post.

When a transition package is planned, it might include support such as:

- Ivel Valley staff visiting the young person in their current setting
- Parents/carers being invited to an information session
- Young person being invited for sessions such as Stay and Play, a look around or a longer visit, depending on their age/need



- Visits to Ivel Valley during the school day, where this is deemed appropriate and meaningful for the individual young person
- The special needs nursing team will also complete an initial assessment with families.

Families are responsible for applying for transport if required directly with the SEND transport team.

Most of our pupils transition to our college site after year 11, but some might wish to move to an alternative placement, based on need. Students can stay at the college until the end of year 14; they move onto a wide variety of placements after this. We have a Preparing for Adulthood team which includes a Transitions Coordinator and Careers Practitioner, to work with young people, parents /carers, staff, further education providers and other relevant professionals (such as the Adults with Learning Disabilities social care team and Youth Support Service) to ensure that everyone is supported in preparing for their next steps after college.

What can families do if they believe their child's needs are not being met?

Parents / carers who believe their young person's needs are not being met should contact the senior leadership team to arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. Where appropriate, an interim EHCP review can be arranged, with representation from the EHC team to formally review a young person's progress and current special educational needs and provision.

We are very committed to collaborative work with families and will always do our best within our capabilities to address concerns promptly and effectively.



Appendix One: provision available to support the areas of areas of need as per the Code of Practice

Cognition & Learning		
Universal offer	Targeted support	Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A carefully sequenced curriculum written in-house, which follows the National Curriculum but is carefully adapted for pupils with SEND, written by experienced SEND teachers, drawing on expertise of other professionals, e.g. SaLT • Personal Learning Plans • Annual Review, parents/ carers evenings • Ongoing contact through Class Dojo • Ongoing assessment of pupils' progress and attainment • Analysis of data and monitoring from an extended leadership team • Small class groups • Teaching assistant support (number dependent on needs) • Ongoing specialised professional development for staff • Use of specialist teaching strategies. • Sounds-Write approach to phonics teaching • SEND-appropriate practical resources, overseen by Areas of Learning leads • Forest School • Music teacher • Multi-agency support • Individual programmes and guidance as appropriate provided by Speech and Language therapists, Occupational therapist and Physiotherapist which are delivered by staff integrated within the class timetable to support and facilitate access to the curriculum • On-site support and monitoring from the special needs nursing team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualised learning programmes • 'Breakout rooms' or use of alternative teaching spaces • Bespoke meetings with parents/carers regarding specific issues • Opportunity for individual learning programmes and the ability to work across other classes or group settings in response to need • Structured activities within a pedagogy focused on play, exploration and enquiry • Use of schedules/now and then • Specialist resources and programmes, such as Numicon, Conquer Maths and Colourful Semantics • Streamed English & Maths at KS4 & 5 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review of personal learning plans • Support from specialist professionals • Multi-agency meetings to review areas of difficulty and levels of support • 1:1 support funded by the SEND team (based on multi-professional evidence of need) • Personalised timetables • Priority access to identified resources such as MILE room /sensory room • Advice from specialist teachers, e.g. Visual Impairment team, Hearing Impairment team



Communication & Interaction		
Universal offer	Targeted support	Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total communication approach throughout the school and college, and communication friendly environments • Communication & Interaction recognised as a prime area of the curriculum. • Visual supports in all classes. • A SCERTS approach, committed to by the whole school • Boardmaker software • Communication Support team in place to help implement good practice within universal offer • Signing embedded in school activities. • Zones of Regulation used consistently & on staff lanyards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NHS SaLT recommendations • Communication targets on Personal Learning Plans • Attention Autism • TACPAC • PECS • Intensive interaction • Colourful Semantics • Signalong • Clicker • Social stories • Personalised Zones of Regulation resources • Specific interventions run by Communication Support team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced personal advice and strategies provided to home and school / college • Direct intervention from SaLT • Individual Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC), such as PECS, communication books / boards, PODD books, or hi-tech aids • Support from CASEE team

Sensory & Physical		
Universal offer	Targeted support	Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A teaching pedagogy based in play, exploration and enquiry • Resources to support practical learning • Well-lit and well-resourced environment • Access for all classes to outdoors learning areas • Stimulating external play areas • Forest School • 1 PE lesson delivered by an experienced PE teacher; 1 delivered by class teacher • Outdoor learning • Outdoor gym equipment • A large field, with spaces to safely regulate • Sensory room • MILE room • Outdoor gym equipment • Low arousal spaces • Swimming • Opportunities to participate in competitive sport • Consistent use of Zones of Regulation • Fine motor skills programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist equipment such as hoists, specialist seating, standing frames provided through Ivel Valley, on the advice from therapists and health colleagues • Physical targets integrated into Personal Learning Plans • Movement breaks • Sensory programme • Sensory diet • MOVE programme - specialist support from MOVE coordinator. • TACPAC • Weighted jackets • Ear defenders • Chewies • Adapted cutlery • Advice from sensory integration lead • Writing supports/ wedges/grips • Adapted scissors • Resonance boards • MATP – Special Olympics programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist sensory Occupational Therapist advice • Specific NHS Occupational Therapist • Music Therapy • NHS Physiotherapist advice • Comprehensive assessment from the MOVE coordinator and wider multidisciplinary team • Highly specialised equipment. • Extra time to access specially adapted bikes. • Horse riding • Hydrotherapy sessions (off site)



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of lots of bikes, including adapted ones. • Dance massage 		
--	--	--

Social, Emotional & Mental Health		
Universal offer	Targeted support	Specialist
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden Rules for school pupils; Expect Respect for college students • Rewards systems, connected to these expectations • Staff trained in Team Teach, with a focus on Positive Behaviour Support • Embedded use of Zones of Regulation • RSE embedded into the curriculum • Support available from Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team, Family Support team (FST) and Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) team • Access to an enriching curriculum • Communication with families via Dojo or student planner (college students) • A trained Senior Mental Health Lead with strategic oversight of provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Positive Behaviour Support Plan • Personalised visual supports, e.g. timers, now/next boards • Personalised Zones of Regulation resources • Regular wellbeing check-ins or mentoring from FST, PBS or PFA teams • Support from the special needs nursing team • Time with our school dog - Stanley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-professional work with other agencies, e.g. Children with Disabilities team, CAMHS • Consultations with CAMHS practitioners • Direct input from PBS team • Specialised therapeutic input, e.g. music therapy • Highly adapted timetable