



Mill Water School

Preparation for *their* best future

SEND INFORMATION REPORT

February 2026

Mill Water School is an academy school and part of the Special Partnership Trust (SPT), a specialist educational trust that aims to raise the bar and set new standards for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) throughout the South West.

Mill Water has a clear approach to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and is supported by SPT to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress in school.

A SEND Information Report will be updated annually to reflect changes and plans within the school. The report states the current provision offered by Mill Water School.

Admissions to the school are in line with our Admissions Policy which is published on the school website. More detail on our commitment to high quality educational provision for all our pupils is detailed in our Teaching and Learning Policy.

What kind of special educational needs does Mill Water make provision for?

Mill Water is an academy special school. We can meet the needs of pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties with sensory and/or physical needs. Pupils may also have autism and multi-sensory impairments.

What is Mill Water School's approach to teaching pupils with SEND?

Our approach includes:

- Ensuring that all National Curriculum and statutory curriculum guidance is delivered to all pupils
- Quality First Teaching which is delivered using a total communication approach
- Providing a wide range of age-respectful learning experiences which are exciting and challenging
- Personalised provision with adapted resources and interventions
- Classes smaller than the average mainstream school, and extra adult support
- Staff who have appropriate training and skills
- Appropriate learning environments
- Promoting the pupils' spiritual, physical and emotional well-being
- An Attachment and Trauma Aware approach to managing relationships and behaviour
- Promoting independence and decision making
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect
- Ensuring ICT enhances the curriculum and communication for all pupils
- Holistic approach to provision of therapy
- Celebrating relationships with parents and families
- Celebrating communication at every level

- Safeguarding, to keep all school members safe
- Preparing all pupils with the skills to enable them to live a lifetime of purposeful leisure

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of the provision made for pupils with SEND at Mill Water School?

All pupils attending Mill Water School have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) and provision for pupils are set based on the outcomes in their EHCP. The PLGs are reviewed termly with parents, with one of these meetings being the statutory Annual Review.

The provision is based on strong values:

- Communicate thoughtfully
- Celebrate achievement
- Behave kindly
- Respect one another

All staff hold in mind our overriding mission, which is to prepare all our pupils for *their best future*, whatever that may be. This helps us understand what approaches, activities and focus best meet pupil need.

Pupil Progress is reported to the Local Governing Body. Mill Water School strives to deliver and constantly improve quality learning experiences for all pupils.

How do we assess and review pupils' progress towards outcomes, including opportunities available to work with parents and pupils as part of this assessment and review?

Every pupil has an EHCP which is reviewed annually at a review meeting. During this review parents, teachers, professionals and, where appropriate, the pupil discuss the pupil's progress and set actions for the following year. Mill Water uses a range of different assessment systems to support the varying needs and ages of its pupils. These include:

- Development Matters and Characteristics of Effective Learning for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (class 1, 2 and 3)
- English (including phonics) and maths assessments for pupils in the semi-formal and formal pathways at KS1, 2, 3 and 4
- Ipsative assessments of learning in PSHE and PE for pupils in the semi-formal and formal pathways at KS1, 2, 3 and 4
- The Engagement Profile for pupils on the pre-formal pathway
- Personal Learning Goals (PLGs) – Mill Water's bespoke assessment for all pupils. Targets are discussed at the Annual Review Meeting and subsequent termly parent meetings. Parents are encouraged to work on the targets at home, alongside the school. Targets are set in areas of need bespoke to the pupil such as self-care, sensory development, or social skills. Progress for each target is tracked throughout the year and pupil progress data collected and monitored.
- EdExcel qualifications at Entry Level in Functional English, Maths and ICT at KS4

We use Evidence for Learning, an online assessment tool, to make observations of pupil progress. Progress against the Mill Water School Core Curriculum and Personal Learning Goals is tracked. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in this process.

How are adaptations made to the curriculum and the learning environment of pupils with SEND?

The curriculum is reviewed to ensure it is in line with statutory guidance and any new regulations. Mill Water School provides a curriculum that is primarily destination led, preparing pupils for their best future. The curriculum is relevant, broad and promotes independence, as well as enabling children to become functional in literacy, numeracy and communication. Our curriculum is thematic and the topics are based on science, the arts, PSHE and humanities. PSHE and RSHE are taught in structured sessions throughout the year. Our pupils are exposed to RE through themed days, events and activities. For some pupils, therapeutic interventions comprise a significant part of their curriculum. Learning environments may be adapted by:

- The resources used (practical, ICT, communication, regulation etc.)
- 1:1, small groups and whole class learning
- Learning areas accessed both in and out of the classroom
- Opportunities to make meaningful choices
- Opportunities to develop life skills in and out of the school
- Advice and resources from external professionals
- Structured use of other school environments (soft play, dark room, rebound)
- Communication resources (symbols, talkers, etc.)
- Different approaches to learning and teaching (pre-formal, semi-formal and formal)
- Deployment of staff

What support is available for improving the overall well-being of pupils with SEND at Mill Water School?

Pupils are supported by:

- An anti-bullying policy that is understood and implemented by all staff
- An Attachment and Trauma Aware approach to Behaviour Regulation, including Attachment Aware Support Plans and Responsive Co-Regulation Plans
- A robust safeguarding policy
- Personal care conducted discreetly and with dignity, fostering independence where possible
- Close working relationship with Devon's Disabled Children's Service
- Staff trained in a range of support packages including total communication, drawing and talking therapy, attachment disorder, forest school etc.
- Targeted support for individual pupils
- School Council

What expertise and training of staff, in relation to SEND, is in place at Mill Water?

An audit of staff expertise in SEND is undertaken annually. We have staff who are trained in the following areas:

- Delivering support for Literacy and Maths
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs, ADHD, ASD, Code of Practice and specific learning difficulties, VI and MSI, OT
- Manual Handling, Safeguarding, Total Communication, PIPS and Makaton (all staff)
- Attachment Aware approaches to behaviour management

A core training programme related to work as a teaching assistant or teacher is provided. Training is specifically related to the needs of children in our school. Teachers undergo regular CPD training. All staff have clear job descriptions which detail the required qualifications for each post.

Specialist expertise in ASD, PIPS, Educational Psychology, CAMHS and therapy is engaged from external services.

How do we secure equipment and facilities to support SEND pupils?

Mill Water is a purpose-built school on one level which is fully accessible for wheelchair users. The shared areas such as therapy pool, rebound and sensory rooms have fully accessible ceiling hoists. The wide corridors have trailing bars and the colour scheme has been chosen with VI pupils in mind.

The school receives support via:

- Devon County Council Support Services
- SPT
- Charities
- Volunteers
- Enrichment

What are our arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEND and how do we involve these parents in the education of their child?

- Individual consultations as directed by the SEND Specialist Support Team (SST)
- Open mornings
- Outreach service

Once a place has been offered:

- Initial visits to school and home
- Stay and play sessions
- Individualised transition support
- Introductory meetings
- Regular newsletters
- Parent workshops and training
- Coffee mornings
- Parent governor opportunities
- Parent involvement in consultations
- Home/School Book, email, phone calls
- Parent View
- Parents Meeting/structured conversations/Parent Forums
- Annual Report to Parents
- Annual Reviews
- Personal Learning Goals and Evidence for Learning
- Open afternoon/class events

What are the arrangements for consulting young people with special educational needs and how do we involve them in their education?

All pupils at Mill Water School are treated with dignity and respect. There is full personalisation of the curriculum for each pupil in order for them to experience success.

- Pupil Voice
- School Council
- Annual Reviews
- Personal Interviews

What arrangements do we have in place relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with SEND concerning the provision made at the school?

Any concerns over a child's progress should be raised with the school. The school also has a Complaints Policy. To view this Policy, visit the Policy Information page on our website.

How does the governing body involve other stakeholders, including health and social services, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and in supporting the families of such pupils?

The governors are aware of the wide range of staff working together within the school to support our pupils, young people and families. Some staff are employed directly by the school; others have different lines of management as can be seen below. Mill Water staff work closely with visiting professionals to provide consistency in approaches. There is monitoring of practice to ensure pupils' needs are met.

All classroom and administrative staff are employed directly by the school.

School nurses, Learning Disability nurses, physiotherapists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists and CAMHS staff are NHS employees.

Behaviour support, advisory teachers and Educational Psychologists are Devon County Council employees. They provide staff training and advice on individual needs.

Multi-Sensory Workers (MSWs) are also Devon County Council employees. They provide one to one support to individual children as specified in their EHCPs.

Transport to school is provided by Devon County Council, not the school. Vehicle drivers and escorts are employed by the transport companies.

Social workers allocated to some families are based within the Disabled Children's Team.

In addition, we have links with

- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Health and Wellbeing Boards
- Therapy Departments

Contact details of other support services for the parents of SEND pupils.

Information about support services available: <https://devonias.org.uk/how-we-can-help/helpful-websites/>

How do we support your child when they are leaving this school or moving to another year?

All transitions are well-planned for throughout the school as pupils move from class to class and phase to phase. Parents/carers have the opportunity to have contact with the new teacher. Pupils are increasingly supported in planning for their transition from school to adult life. Careers South-West (CSW) staff attend meetings and work with families to advise on what is available after Mill Water.

We offer:

- Transfer support
- Transition arrangements
- Outreach service
- Bespoke curriculum for pre-formal, semi-formal, formal pathways and post 16
- National accreditation
- Supported college taster days

For further information please view the Careers Policy and Moving On pages on the school website.

Who are the best people to talk to at Mill Water School?

Telephone the school on 01395 568890

Head teacher: *Sarah Pickering*

Deputy Head: *Sally Cregan*

Assistant Heads/Pathway Leads: *Andrew Maker, Gemma Moore, Grace Norman*

School Business Manager: *Paula Harris*

Or speak to your child's class teacher

Chair of the Local Governing Body: *Andrew Gardner*

For information about the Local Authority's offer please visit:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/children-families-education/send-local-offer/>