Joseph Hood Primary School

Our Local Offer for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Welcome to Joseph Hood Primary School

Joseph Hood Primary School is an inclusive school where we want every child to feel welcome, valued and included in all aspects of learning and school life.

Our most recent Ofsted report, from June 2026, stated:

"This is a highly inclusive school where every pupil thrives. Staff fully integrate all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders deliver the highest quality support for those with the greatest needs through identifying and removing any barriers to pupils' learning immediately and effectively".

We are proud of our inclusive approach and work hard to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn, make progress, develop friendships and take part fully in school life.

Introduction

Children learn and develop in different ways. Some children may need extra help at certain times during their school journey, while others may need additional support over a longer period to help them access learning and participate fully in school life.

Special educational provision means support that is additional to, or different from, the support normally available to children of the same age. This may include adapted teaching, additional help in the classroom, specific interventions or support from specialist professionals.

At Joseph Hood, inclusion is part of everything we do. All our teachers are teachers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). They provide high-quality teaching that takes account of each child's individual needs and helps them to make progress.

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) oversees the provision and support available to children with SEND.

Our SENDCo is:

Wendy Shepard B.A. (Hons) QTS, PGSEND

SENDCo/Assistant Head of School / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Email: senco@josephhood.merton.sch.uk

1. How does Joseph Hood Primary School identify children who may need extra help?

We want to identify children's needs as early as possible so that we can put the right support in place.

We may identify that a child needs additional help through:

- **Parents' and carers' concerns:** You know your child best, and we value any information you share with us.
- **Teachers' observations:** Your child's class teacher may notice that they need extra support with learning, communication, social interaction, emotional wellbeing or another aspect of their development.
- **Regular progress checks:** We track all children's progress each term. Senior leaders, including the SENDCo, review this information to check that children are making expected progress and identify where further support may be needed.
- **Information from previous settings:** We may receive information from nurseries, previous schools or other professionals who have worked with your child.
- **Advice from health professionals:** Information or diagnoses provided by health visitors, doctors, paediatricians and other relevant professionals can help us understand your child's needs.

We work together with families and other professionals to build a clear picture of each child and decide what support may be helpful.

2. What should I do if I think my child has special educational needs?

If you have concerns about your child's learning or development, please talk to us. We want to work in partnership with you and welcome open conversations about how your child is getting on.

You can:

- **Speak to your child's class teacher.** They are usually the best person to talk to first and will be happy to arrange a convenient meeting before or after school.
- **Arrange a meeting with the SENDCo.** If you would like further advice or support, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.
- **Email the SENDCo directly** at senco@josephhood.merton.sch.uk

Your child's teacher may also arrange a meeting with the SENDCo so that we can discuss your concerns together and agree on the best ways to support your child.

We value positive relationships with parents and carers. We aim to be open and honest with you and hope you feel comfortable sharing your concerns and experiences with us.

3. How will I know what support the school is providing for my child?

We will talk with you about your child's needs and the support that may help them make progress.

This may include:

- Meetings with your child's class teacher and/or the SENDCo to discuss suitable support and interventions.
- Explaining what an intervention involves, how long it is expected to last and how we will measure your child's progress.
- Opportunities to meet with the teacher or teaching assistant who is delivering an intervention.
- Setting individual targets through a **Individual Support Plan (ISP)**, which will be shared with you.

We will work with you to review your child's targets and discuss what is working well and whether any changes are needed.

Our aim is to make sure that you understand the support your child receives and that we work together to help them achieve their potential.

4. How will teaching and the curriculum be adapted to meet my child's needs?

We want every child to access learning, take part in lessons and make progress. Teachers adapt their teaching to reflect children's individual strengths and needs.

Support may include:

- **High-quality, personalised classroom teaching:** Teachers build on what your child already knows and can do. They may adapt activities, use practical resources, break learning into smaller steps or provide different ways for your child to access the lesson.
- **Targeted interventions:** Where a child needs additional help, we may use a specific programme or intervention that has evidence of making a positive difference to learning. These programmes are delivered by teachers or teaching assistants who have received relevant training and usually run for a set period.
- **Monitoring progress:** The class teacher and SENDCo review how well an intervention is working and share progress with parents and carers.
- **Advice from other professionals:** Where appropriate, we use recommendations and strategies from professionals who have worked with your child, such as a speech and language therapist or occupational therapist or other professionals who are able to provide advice and support.

We regularly review the support children receive and make changes when needed to ensure that it continues to meet their needs.

5. How will the school know how well my child is doing?

We regularly check children's progress to make sure that they are learning and developing as expected.

This includes:

- Class teachers and the SENDCo monitoring your child's progress and discussing their needs with other staff who support them.

- Termly progress meetings between class teachers and members of the Senior Leadership Team, focusing particularly on reading, writing mathematics and social/emotional development.
- Reviewing the targets on your child's Individual Support Plan (ISP) to see what progress has been made.
- Discussing the effectiveness of interventions and deciding whether support should continue, change or increase.

If your child makes sufficient progress and no longer needs additional support, they may no longer need to remain on the school's SEND register. This decision will be considered carefully in partnership with parents.

If your child is not making the progress we would expect, we will review the support in place. This may mean changing an intervention, trying a different approach or seeking further advice from specialist professionals.

We want to make sure that the support we provide is helpful and makes a positive difference to your child's learning and development.

6. How will I know how my child is getting on?

We believe that regular communication between home and school is important. We want you to feel informed about your child's progress and able to ask questions or share concerns.

We provide the following opportunities to discuss your child:

- **Termly parent/teacher meetings** to talk about your child's learning, progress and support.
- **Meetings with the class teacher and/or SENDCo** at other times during the year, by appointment, whenever you need to discuss your child's needs.
- **Termly Individual Support Plan reviews**, when your child's targets and progress are discussed and shared with you.
- **Meetings with other professionals** who may be working with your child, where appropriate.
- **Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings**, when a range of professionals, parents/carers and support network come together to plan the best way to support a child.
- **Annual reviews for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**, held at school to review the plan and the support provided.

- **An annual school report**, written by your child's class teacher and shared towards the end of the summer term.

We aim to work in partnership with you throughout your child's time at Joseph Hood.

7. How can I support my child's learning at home?

We know that parents and carers play an important role in children's learning. We will work with you to help you understand how best to support your child at home.

We can do this by:

- Arranging meetings to discuss your child's progress, answer questions and share ideas.
- Providing practice activities at home where these form part of an intervention.
- Using a home/school contact book where we have agreed that this would be helpful for you and your child.
- Offering parent/carer meetings run by our Maths and Literacy subject leaders, with advice and ideas to help you support your child's learning.

Please speak to your child's teacher if you would like further advice about supporting their learning at home.

8. What support is available for my child's wellbeing, medical needs and personal circumstances?

We understand that children need to feel safe, happy and supported to learn well. We provide pastoral care and a range of support for children's emotional wellbeing, medical needs and personal circumstances.

Emotional wellbeing and pastoral support

- Your child's class teacher is responsible for their day-to-day social and pastoral care.
- We have a **Nurture space** and five part-time Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). These staff are trained and supervised by an Educational Psychologist and help children with their emotional and social needs.

- We use positive approaches to behaviour and recognise children's achievements through a range of incentives including certificates, house points and Golden Ticket rewards.
- Our anti-bullying policy has been reviewed with the involvement of children.

Medical needs and health support

- We have a policy covering the administration of medicines in school.
- We keep records of children with medical needs and allergies and share relevant information with staff so that appropriate support can be provided.
- We have staff trained in paediatric first aid.
- Staff receive training in supporting children with diabetes, using an Adrenaline Auto-Injector (Epipen or Jext), allergy training, supporting children with cochlear implants and responding to epileptic seizures.
- The School Nurse works with parents and carers to write care plans for children with medical needs. These plans are shared with relevant staff. Our School Nurse is Anna Tlms.
- Meetings with the school nursing service can be arranged where needed.

Advice and guidance

- We use Merton's Ordinarily Available Guidance to help us understand the support and strategies that schools can provide to meet children's needs.
- All staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training in line with Local Authority requirements and current legislation.

We aim to make sure that children receive appropriate support and that staff understand how to help them feel safe, included and ready to learn.

10. What specialist support and expertise are available?

We have staff with a range of training and experience who help us meet children's learning, communication, social, emotional and physical needs.

Support available within our school

Our staff expertise and provision include:

- **Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)** who support children's emotional and social wellbeing.
- **ELKLAN-trained teaching assistants** who have additional training from speech and language therapists to support children's communication and language development.
- **A Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA)** with additional training in supporting children with speech, language and communication needs.
- **Early Years staff trained in the Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI)** to support early language development.
- **Numicon-trained teaching assistants** who support children's understanding of mathematics.
- **Staff trained to use the junior version of the Dyslexia Screening Kit.**
- **Teaching assistants trained in a range of interventions** to support children's basic skills.
- **Staff training in children's mental health and wellbeing.**
- **Training for all staff in the Zones of Regulation**, which helps children recognise and manage their emotions.
- **Training for all staff in trauma and attachment**, helping them understand how children's experiences may affect their feelings and behaviour.
- **Training for all staff on ADHD / Autism** and how best to support children with these neuro differences in school.

Specialist services we can access outside school

When children need further advice or specialist support, we may work with the following services, depending on their individual needs:

- Educational Psychologist.
- Merton SEND Support and Inclusion Service (MSSIS).
- Virtual Behaviour Service.
- Emotional and Behavioural Support.
- Speech and Language Therapy Service.

- Looked After Children's Team.
- Young Carers services.
- Merton Sensory Team.
- Occupational Therapy Team.
- Physiotherapy Team.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- School Nurse – Ms Anna Tims.
- Merton Independent Parent Partnership Officer, who provides support for parents and carers of children with additional needs.

We work with families and relevant professionals to help ensure that advice and recommendations inform the support provided in school.

11. What training have staff received to support children with SEND?

We are committed to ensuring that our staff have the knowledge and skills they need to support children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). We provide regular training to help staff understand children's individual needs and use appropriate strategies to support their learning, communication, behaviour and emotional wellbeing.

Our SENDCo, Wendy Shepard, was awarded the Post-Graduate National Award in Special Educational Needs Management in October 2015 and has worked in this role for the past eleven years. Our Executive Headteacher, Anita Saville has also completed accredited SENCo training, NPQSENCo in 2026.

Language, communication and learning

- Nuffield Early Language Intervention (NELI) training for Early Years staff in September 2024 and September 2025.
- Supporting children with communication and speech and language difficulties.
- Supporting children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the classroom.
- Supporting communication for children with ASD (November 2023).
- Embedding mathematical language in the classroom for children with SEND (November 2023).
- Developing reading fluency (November 2023).
- Supporting dyslexia in the classroom (November 2023).
- Precision teaching (November 2023).
- Using the TALC assessment in primary schools (November 2023).

- Supporting writing for children with additional needs (November 2023).

Emotional wellbeing, behaviour and mental health

- Mental Health Lead training.
- Supporting children with ADHD in school (October 2023).
- De-escalation techniques for children (November 2023).
- Providing high-quality first teaching for children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (November 2023).
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy training (December 2023).
- Training in supporting children affected by trauma and attachment needs.
- Zones of Regulation training to help children understand and manage their emotions.

Inclusive teaching and specialist needs

- Supporting children with visual and hearing impairments in primary school (November 2023).
- Adaptive approaches and pedagogies (December 2023).
- Merton Ordinarily Available Guidance training during the summer term of 2024, covering Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, sensory impairment support, Write Away Together, TRUGS, dyslexia myth-busting and precision teaching.
- Using strategies to support children with sensory difficulties (January 2025).
- Merton SEN Project (Autumn term 2024).
- Ongoing training in using Merton's Ordinarily Available Guidance across all phases.

Ongoing professional development

We continue to develop staff knowledge and skills through:

- SEND training for all learning support assistants and class teachers every half-term.
- Termly Merton SENDCo Forum meetings.
- Inclusion Cluster meetings.
- West Wimbledon Cluster SENDCo meetings.

This ongoing training helps staff develop their understanding of SEND, adapt their teaching and provide appropriate support so that children can access learning, make progress and feel included in school life.

12. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including school trips?

We want all children to have the opportunity to take part in school trips and activities outside the classroom.

All children are included in these opportunities. Sometimes, additional planning or support may be needed to help a child participate safely and comfortably. This may include working with parents or carers to understand a child's needs and plan any necessary arrangements.

Staff complete risk assessments to identify and manage potential risks and help ensure that children can access activities safely.

13. How accessible is the school building?

We aim to make our school accessible so that children can take part in school life as fully as possible.

Our facilities and arrangements include:

- Ramps and a lift to help children with physical disabilities access the school building and playground.
- A disabled toilet on each floor of the school building.
- An electric, height-adjustable changing table.
- Advice from the Merton Sensory Team to help us meet the needs of children with hearing or visual impairments and make appropriate adjustments.
- A school extension, built in 2012, that is fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements stated in our existing information.
- Staff who speak a range of languages to help support communication with children and families.

We will consider children's individual needs and seek appropriate advice to help them access the school environment.

14. How will the school support my child when they join Joseph Hood or move to a new class or school?

We understand that changes and transitions can sometimes be worrying for children with SEND. We plan ahead to help children feel prepared, supported and confident when they move into a new setting, class or school.

If your child is joining us from another school or setting:

- We will arrange a meeting with you to learn as much as possible about your child's needs, strengths and interests.
- We will use the information you share, alongside information from the previous setting where available, to help plan a positive settling-in period.
- We will consider what additional support or arrangements may help your child feel comfortable and ready to learn.

We also work to support children as they move between classes and prepare to transfer to another school.

How are staffing and funding planned to support children with SEND?

The SENDCo works closely with the School Finance Officer, the designated SEND Governor, the Head of School and the Executive Headteacher to review how effectively SEND funding is spent.

Teaching assistants are deployed across the school according to children's needs and staff expertise.

Pupil Premium funding is used according to identified needs to support a range of activities. Details of this spending are published on the school website, and senior leaders monitor its impact.

16. How is the level of support for my child decided, and how will I be involved?

We consider each child's individual needs when deciding what support is appropriate.

The Executive Headteacher, Head of School and SENDCo review information about SEND across the school, including:

- Children who are already receiving additional support.
- Children who may need extra help.
- Children who are not making the progress we would expect.

This information helps us plan staffing, resources, training and support. Arrangements are reviewed regularly, and changes are made when needed.

Your child's individual provision is discussed through School Support meetings, termly progress meetings and, for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), annual review meetings.

Class teachers, the SENDCo and members of the Senior Leadership Team work together to review children's progress and consider whether their support is meeting their needs.

We value the contribution of parents and carers and aim to involve you in discussions about your child's progress and the support that may help them.

17. How can my child share their views about school and the support they receive?

We believe that children should have opportunities to express their views and help shape their experiences at school.

We encourage children to talk about what is going well, what they find difficult and what might help them.

We do this through:

- **Pupil groups:** Children can join groups covering different aspects of school life, including our School Changemaker Team who include Environmental Champions, Wellbeing Champions and Reading Champions. These provide opportunities for pupils to discuss ideas, give pupils a voice in school and contribute to wider school life.

- **Individual Support Plans:** Children with an ISP are encouraged to discuss and help set their targets with their class teacher.
- **Annual children's questionnaires:** These gather children's views, including whether they feel able to speak to an adult if they have a worry.
- **EHCP annual reviews:** Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan are encouraged to share their views as part of the annual review process.

We value children's opinions and use their feedback to help us understand their experiences and improve inclusion across the school.

19. How can I get involved in school life?

We warmly welcome parents and carers who would like to get involved in our school community.

There are several ways you can contribute:

- **Volunteering:** Parents and carers can help with activities such as supporting the library, accompanying school trips or running art groups. All school volunteers must have the appropriate current, enhanced DBS clearance, which can be arranged through the school office in line with our safeguarding procedures.
- **Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA):** Our PTFA is active in school and meets on most Friday mornings. Each class has a parent PTFA representative who can provide more information about getting involved.
- **School governance:** Parents are represented on the school's governing body and can contribute to the wider life and development of the school.

We value the time, ideas and support that families bring to our school community.

20. Who can I contact for further information or advice?

If you have a question or concern about your child's needs or the support available, please contact us. We are happy to talk with you and help you find the information you need.

Your child's class teacher

Your child's class teacher is usually the first person to contact. They will be happy to arrange a convenient time to discuss your child's learning, progress or wellbeing.

SENDCo – Wendy Shepard

You can contact Wendy through the school office to arrange a meeting or please email her directly:

Email: senco@josephhood.merton.sch.uk

Merton Parent Partnership Officer – Fran Turko

Fran provides support and advice for parents and carers of children with additional needs across Merton. Her office is based on our school site.

Telephone: 0208 543 8854

Email: fran.turko@merton.gov.uk

SEND Governor – Liz Brewin

Liz is the school's designated governor for SEND and can be contacted through the school office.

Other sources of information

- **Kids First / Merton Mencap:** www.mertonmencap.org.uk
- **Merton Local Offer:** The Merton Local Offer provides information about services and support available for children and young people with additional needs and their families. Please search Merton Families Information Digital Offer for further information

Complaints policy

At Joseph Hood Primary School, we work hard to provide a friendly, safe and inclusive environment where every child is supported to achieve their potential, both academically and socially.

We aim to listen carefully to parents and carers, build positive relationships and work together to resolve concerns.

If you have a concern about your child's support, please contact the school so that we can discuss it with you.

Our Complaints Policy is available on the school website, and you can request a paper copy from the school office.

Last updated: October 2026

Next review date: October 2027