



MERE SCHOOL

INCLUSION STRATEGY STATEMENT

Academic Year 2026–2027

STATUTORY CONTEXT & FUNDING FRAMEWORK: This statement details Mere School’s approach to delivering inclusive practice for all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), disadvantaged learners (Pupil Premium, Looked After Children), and pupils with additional vulnerabilities. Funded through our core school budget (including the notional SEN budget) and the DfE Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF). Fully anchored in the DfE SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act 2010 (Public Sector Equality Duty), Children and Families Act 2014, KCSIE 2026, and Local Authority Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) guidelines.

1. Strategy Overview & Governance

Academic year(s) covered	September 2026 – July 2027
Date statement published	31st December 2026
Implementation review milestones	Mid-Year Review: 28th February 2027 (EEF recommendation) End-of-Year Formal Review: 30th June 2027
Statement written/authorised by	Mr David Rich (Deputy Headteacher)
Inclusion Senior Leadership Team	Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy Headteacher, SENDCo, English Lead, Maths Lead and Senior Mental Health lead.
Governing body oversight	Curriculum Governors (Termly Meetings)
Specialist SEMH Support Role	ELSA-Trained Teaching Assistants (Emotional Literacy Support)

2. Statement of Intent & Statutory Framework

2.1 Whole-School Vision, Scope & Curriculum Ambition

At Mere School, our overarching mission is to deliver an ambitious, highly inclusive mainstream primary education where every child—regardless of start point or background—feels valued, safe, supported, and empowered to achieve their full potential. Resourced through our core school budget, the notional SEN budget, and the Inclusive Mainstream Fund (IMF), our strategy systematically removes barriers to learning and closes attainment gaps.

Broadened Vulnerable Cohort Scope: While maintaining rigorous provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, this strategy explicitly encompasses all vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. This includes pupils eligible for

Pupil Premium (PP), Looked After Children (LAC/PLC), Service Children, and pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL).

Curriculum Ambition Statement: We maintain uncompromised academic expectations for all pupils. Adaptive teaching and targeted support are designed to scaffold access to the full, broad, and balanced National Curriculum. Under no circumstances do inclusion adjustments lead to curriculum narrowing, reduced academic expectations, or unnecessary withdrawal from core foundation subjects.

2.2 Inclusion and Safeguarding

Statutory Safeguarding Integration: In compliance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026), Mere School recognizes that pupils with SEND, communication difficulties, or additional vulnerabilities face a statistically heightened risk of abuse, neglect, peer-on-peer (child-on-child) abuse, and exploitation. Their indicators of distress may present as behavioral changes, emotional withdrawal, or attendance dips rather than explicit verbal disclosures.

Strategic Collaboration: To ensure robust protection and early help, our Senior Leadership Team convene bi-weekly to evaluate current practice in Teaching and Learning, English, maths and SEND, discuss early help intervention and risk assessments and where support is needed. Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher monitor attendance alongside the office team and EWO. Regular parent attendance meetings are held.

Safeguarding Triggers: Persistent absenteeism and Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA) are treated primarily as potential safeguarding and well-being indicators. Attendance tracking protocols trigger mandatory early help reviews and multi-agency consultations before escalating to statutory attendance enforcement, ensuring underlying harm or anxiety is proactively identified and addressed.

2.3 Targeted SEMH Provision & EEF TA Deployment

Dedicated SEMH Intervention via ELSA-Trained TAs: To systematically address Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs—identified as a core barrier to learning—Mere School deploys Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) trained Teaching Assistants. ELSA TAs receive ongoing supervision from Educational Psychologists and deliver targeted 1:1 and small-group interventions focusing on emotional awareness, self-regulation, anxiety management, friendship skills, loss/bereavement, and self-esteem.

EEF TA Deployment Safeguards: Adhering strictly to the EEF guidance report Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants, TAs (including ELSA TAs) are deployed to supplement and support class teacher instruction. All pupils receiving targeted SEMH, literacy, or numeracy support are guaranteed equal direct instructional contact time with their class teacher, preventing instructional isolation.

Metacognition & Cognitive Modeling: To foster independent, resilient learners, high-quality adaptive teaching embeds EEF-recommended metacognitive strategies. Teachers explicitly model cognitive processes, use visual timetables, display writing on pastel-coloured background, encourage and support pupil self-regulation and scaffold tasks across core and curriculum subjects.

2.4 Embedding the 7 Principles of Inclusion

1. Ambitious Leadership & Governance: Inclusion is driven by a unified Senior Leadership Team (SLT)—comprising the Headteacher and DSL, SENDCo, Deputy Headteacher, and English and Maths and Mental Health Leads. Governing body oversight is embedded through a dedicated Curriculum & Inclusion Governor who conducts termly learning walks and inclusion strategy audits. DHT has created Class Inclusion Profiles to identify vulnerable learners in every class, explicitly outlining barriers to learning and provision in place, so that all stakeholders are aware.

2. Evidence-Based Support & The Graduated Approach (APDR): All targeted interventions are anchored in EEF research and delivered via the statutory Assess, Plan, Do, Review (APDR) cycle. Need identification utilizes classroom observations, internal assessments, Insight Tracker data, and external specialist consultation. Gaps in pupils' knowledge is where targeted interventions has highest impact. We find that because our mobility is high, many pupils join us late in KS2 and it is these pupils who have the most gaps in their basic skills and knowledge. It has been noted that our homegrown pupils (who have been with us since Reception) have significantly less gaps in their skills and knowledge.

3. Adaptive Teaching & Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP): Classroom environments universally reflect Local Authority Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) baselines. Adaptive features include neurodivergent-friendly spaces (pastel tones, reduced visual noise, visual timetables), explicit instruction, scaffolding, metacognitive tools, and assistive technology.

4. Enriching Provision Beyond the Classroom: We guarantee equal accessibility to non-academic learning and cultural capital experiences—including outdoor learning, topic-based visits, visitors from local businesses, residential visits to Springhead and Plas Pencelli, theatre visits, and extracurricular clubs—for all pupils, including SEND, Pupil Premium and vulnerable pupils.

5. Safe, Respectful Culture & Emotional Regulation: Our whole-school behaviour policy is trauma-informed, prioritizing relational approaches, emotional regulation, and calm environments. Dedicated ELSA TAs deliver specialized SEMH interventions to pupils. We have a school counsellor who works with a targeted group of pupils 1:1 in school each week on their specific emotional needs. Wiltshire Mental Health Support Team (Wiltshire MHST) work with pupils in school. Play therapists work with pupils in school.

6. Strong Partnerships with Families & Services: We co-produce learning pathways with parents and carers through regular parent sessions, attendance workshops, open afternoons, and multi-agency team meetings.

7. Inclusive & Accessible Environments: Physical and sensory accessibility is continuously audited under our Accessibility Plan. During 2026–2027, our new tailor-made Sensory Garden will be fully operational, offering dedicated regulation space for neurodivergent learners.

3. Identified Barriers to Learning & Vulnerability Scope

Comprehensive diagnostic assessment, Insight Tracker analysis, and SEN review meetings have identified seven primary barriers to learning across our student population, encompassing both academic competencies and social-emotional factors:

#	Barrier to Learning	Context, Impact & Targeted Intervention Strategy
1	Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)	Class Inclusion Profiles identify those in need of support with emotional dysregulation, anxiety, low self-esteem, or attachment difficulties impacting classroom engagement, peer interactions, and readiness to learn. Addressed via ELSA-trained TAs delivering structured 1:1 and small-group emotional literacy support (emotional regulation, self-esteem, loss, social skills) in designated calm spaces.
2	Attendance	Persistent absence trends among vulnerable/SEND pupils driven by anxiety or SEMH needs. Addressed via supportive parent partnerships, EBSA pathways, and KCSIE early help triggers.
3	Reading – Decoding	Gaps in foundational phonics and decoding skills in EYFS and Key Stage 1. Addressed via daily teacher-led ELS Phonics catch-up interventions.
4	Reading – Comprehension	Vocabulary deficits and inference difficulties across Key Stage 2, restricting access to wider curriculum subjects. Addressed via targeted small-group guided reading.
5	Maths – Number Facts	Fluency and recall gaps in core number bonds and multiplication tables. Addressed via White Rose Fluency Boosts, Number Stacks, and Precision Teaching.
6	Spelling Application	Inconsistent application of phonics rules and common exception words in independent writing across KS1/KS2. Addressed via structured Precision Teaching routines.
7	Handwriting & Motor Skills	Fine motor control and spatial awareness difficulties impacting legibility and writing stamina. Addressed via targeted ELS mnemonic handwriting groups.

4. Provision Schedule & Resource Allocation (2026–2027)

Description of Activity & Evidence Base	Provision Type	Funding Stream	Barriers Addressed
Targeted 1:1 ELSA Support (ELSA-trained TAs providing emotional literacy, self-regulation & social skills support; EP supervised) and Counselling. Wiltshire Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and Play Therapists visit school to work with specific pupils.	Targeted	IMF Allocation / Notional SEN	Barrier 1 (SEMH) & Barrier 2 (EBSA)
Behavior Policy Review & Trauma Training (EEF positive climate evidence; whole-school relational & regulation focus)	Universal	Core Budget / IMF	Barrier 1 (SEMH) & Barrier 2 (Attendance)

Class Inclusion Profiles are in place for each class, Universal Adaptive Teaching, Metacognitive Tools & OAP (LA Ordinarily Available Provision alignment; visual timetables & scaffolds)	Universal	Core Budget	Barriers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Parent Cafes, Workshops & EBSA Early Help Meetings (EEF family engagement evidence; proactive home-school trust)	Targeted	IMF Allocation	Barrier 2 (Attendance / EBSA)
Targeted Small-Group Interventions & TA SEN Surgeries (ELS Phonics, White Rose Fluency, Precision Teaching; EEF TA protocol)	Targeted	Notional SEN / IMF	Barriers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
Outdoor Learning, Springhead, Plas Pencelli Residential & Cultural Capital (Enrichment equity for SEND, Pupil Premium, and vulnerable cohorts)	Universal	IMF Allocation	Barrier 1 (SEMH) & Holistic Progress

5. Quantifiable Success Criteria and Impact

Domain / Area	Intended Outcome Statement	Quantifiable Success Criteria (July 2027 Target)
SEMH & Emotional Regulation	Measurable improvement in social-emotional well-being and self-regulation among targeted vulnerable pupils.	Pupils receiving ELSA support demonstrate reduced behavioral distress incidents. School counsellor working 1:1 with pupils with emotional needs notes improvement in resilience.
Parental & Community Engagement	Increased trust and active co-production from families of vulnerable learners.	Attendance of targeted parents at parent workshops/cafes and positive feedback on home-school communication.
Attendance & EBSA Reduction	Significant reduction in persistent absenteeism among SEND and disadvantaged cohorts.	Persistent absence among SEND & PP pupils reduced by 25% (overall target <8%); zero unresolved CME cases.
Reading Decoding & Phonics	Accelerated catch-up in foundational reading for Y1/Y2 vulnerable pupils.	Pupils receiving ELS Phonics catch-up pass Year 1 Phonics Screening Check to meet age-expected benchmarks.
Reading Comprehension	Expanded vocabulary and inference skills across Key Stage 2 targeted cohorts.	Targeted KS2 SEND/PP pupils achieve expected or accelerated progress milestones on Insight Tracker.
Maths Fact Fluency	Mastery of core number bonds and multiplication tables in KS1 and KS2.	Pupils in White Rose/Precision Teaching achieve age-related fluency scores on MTC.

Adaptive Teaching & TA Quality	High-quality, compliant classroom provision and ELSA/TA deployment across all classes.	100% of SLT lesson visits reflect OAP baseline standards and adhere to EEF equal teacher contact time protocols.
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6. Implementation Review & Governance Cadence

To maintain high implementation fidelity and agile leadership (aligned with EEF implementation recommendations), review assessments follow a strict two-stage cadence:

- 1. Mid-Year Implementation Milestone (28th February 2027):** SLT, SENDCo, Lead ELSA TA, and Subject Leads evaluate initial progress, intervention attendance, Boxall Profile data, and Insight Tracker mid-year assessment data. Resource allocations and ELSA/academic intervention groups are adjusted dynamically based on preliminary impact.
- 2. End-of-Year Formal Review (30th June 2027):** Formal retrospective review published incorporating national assessment outcomes (Y1 Phonics Check, Y4 Multiplication Tables Check, KS2 SATs) alongside summative Insight Tracker tracking, ELSA progress logs, attendance registers, and governor monitoring reports.
- 3. Governance Challenge Schedule:** The Curriculum Governors conduct termly learning walks, meet with pupil voice panels, and submit monitoring reports to the Full Governing Board every term.

7. Statutory References & Dialogue

This Inclusion Strategy operates in full conjunction with the following statutory documents and school policies:

- DfE Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015/2026)
- Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)
- Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2026)
- EEF Guidance Reports: Making Best Use of Teaching Assistants & Improving Behaviour in Schools
- Mere School SEND Information Report, Safeguarding Policy & Accessibility Plan
- Local Authority Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) Guidance