

Woodlands Meed Strategic Plan 2026-2030

Strap Line: "Building Unique Futures Together"

Woodlands Meed Mission: *To provide an excellent education, together with independence, life and employment skills for generic special needs learners from 2 – 19 years old with an EHCP - in the heart of the community.*

Woodlands Meed Vision: To be a best practice Generic Special Needs School with expertise in Autism, Communication and SEND Careers Education.

Core Ethos and Values: **Students First** - everything we do is in the interest of achieving the best possible outcome for our young people.

Aspiration – we aim to provide the best possible opportunities for each individual.

Empowerment – we will provide the staff team with the training, support and facilities to enable us to achieve our vision

Strategic Approach

RESPECT	CHALLENGE	COLLABORATION
To ensure individual respect for each child	To ensure each child is challenged to achieve their potential in independence, life skills and academic achievement	To work collaboratively throughout all areas of the school and with parents and local community
For the child this means	For the child this means	For the child this means
- I know there is a team of people who care about me - I know there are people who will listen to me - I know I am valued, respected and understood	I know there is a team of people enabling me to learn and succeed	I know there is a team of people who understand me and help me achieve my best
For the staff this means	For the staff this means	For the staff this means
Recognising the individual needs and strengths of each child	Planning and facilitating unique, enjoyable opportunities to maximise learning and potential	- Working with the staff team, families and outside agencies to achieve the best outcomes for each child - Ensuring opportunities from the wider community are utilised - Investing in training for the staff to maximise their skills
For the parent this means	For the parent this means	For the parent this means

• Knowing I can contact the school with concerns and anxieties and that I will be supported • Feeling confident that my child is safe, valued, understood and respected	• Knowing my child is being challenged to achieve to the best of their ability	• Working with the school and outside agencies to achieve the best for my child
For the governor this means	For the governor this means	For the governor this means
• Ensuring that policies and procedures are in place to guarantee a safe and compliant school environment • Endorsing decisions that are in the welfare interests of pupils, parents and staff • Knowing that staff will welcome Governors into the school to further their knowledge	• Ensuring that resources are available and deployed for the best possible outcomes for pupils • Ensuring that all employees of the school are accountable and maintain the highest values and ethics in their working practices • Challenging the leadership team to ensure that the Woodlands Meed development plan supports the strategic priorities for Woodlands Meed	• Working with the wider school community for the benefit of the pupils and their families • Working with the local authority, other stakeholders and businesses to maintain the excellent reputation of the school • Working to promote and showcase Woodlands Meed in the SEN and wider community

Background:

1. Woodlands Meed is a Foundation Special School that opened in 2012. It was formed from the amalgamation of two special needs schools (Court Meadow and Newick House). We have two fantastic modern buildings in the heart of Burgess Hill. These amazing facilities, combined with an innovative Governing Body and Leadership Team, enables us to provide an incredible broad and engaging curriculum for the students. As a Foundation Special School, the Governing Body owns the freehold of the land and is the staff employer. This has allowed the Governing Body to optimise future opportunities, support more students and secure future opportunities, we have expanded from 228 pupils in 2012, to 295 in 2025

2. The school leadership team work to ensure that the curriculum from Early Years to Key Stage 5 is the best that can be achieved – it was judged as continuing to be “Good” in the last Ofsted inspection in October 2023. We have a range of kite marks on our website which demonstrate the exceptional work done in many curriculum areas including: autism, careers and communication. At Woodlands Meed, the curriculum is designed to provide our pupils with opportunities to gain relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. We aim to ensure that our pupils become well-rounded, happy individuals who are ready for the next stage of their lives.

3. Woodlands Meed curriculum

All strands can overlap, allowing pupils to follow an individualised programme beneficial to their learning and development. (pupils may change pathways at certain points if beneficial to their progress.)

Practice skills are embedded across all the different coloured curriculums. Full details of our curriculum can be found on the website [click me](#)

In Reception (EYFS / Purple Curriculum), pupils are building resilience and connections to settle into school, learning to follow the structures and routines of the day, developing pre-learning, play skills and early communication. From this point onwards the pupils receive a curriculum that is at the appropriate level while also developing independence, social and life skills, to prepare them for the next stage of their education journey.

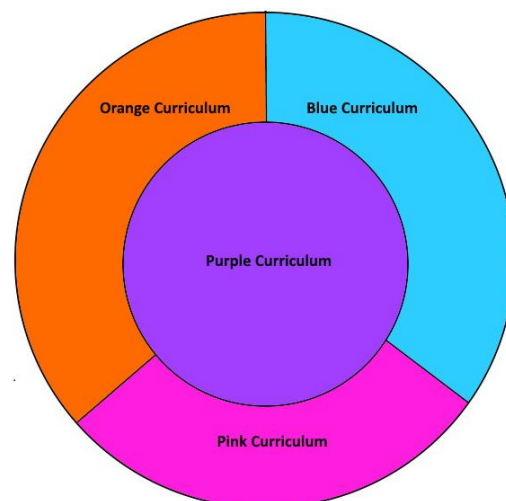
In KS4 and KS5, the curriculum is designed to prepare our young people for adulthood and maximise the benefit pupils can receive from their time at Woodlands Meed. As well as an academic curriculum it includes Enterprise and Vocational elements, Independent Life & Living Skills, College Link courses and a progressive Careers programme which meets all the Gatsby Benchmarks.

4. A key concern for parents is what will happen to their children once they leave the school environment - The college provides parents with support for this transition by facilitating access to a range of multi-disciplinary professionals and external care providers. Woodlands Meed is working in collaboration with WSCC and launching a Supported Internship Programme for students aged 16-24 from September 2026. Woodlands Meed are also working to develop a fantastic Life Skills Centre and Community Space. As a legacy of the new college building, we are working with architects designs and plans to revitalise an old barn and caretaker's cottage.

5. Woodlands Meed has successfully developed a significant number of teachers through Initial Teacher Training and the School Direct programme, while supporting their existing staff team through training for their own personal development and to ensure best practice, is shared with others. Woodlands Meed provides fantastic support for its employees through well-being support services, well-being focused INSET days and excellent training opportunities.

6. Since it was established, the school has developed recognition for its skills and expertise, and readiness to share these with local mainstream schools through the Meeds SEND Alliance, providing outreach support and a full training programme. The school supports all the mainstream schools in the Mid-Sussex area through the local authority Special Education Outreach Service (SEOS).

7. Woodlands Meed is constantly striving to develop opportunities through innovative practices that utilise the latest technology and research. The organisation is always looking for innovative collaboration with other schools and organisations. The organisation is constantly reviewing its sustainability practices through constantly reviewing policy changes in education and assessing how they may impact on the governance of the school and college.



Strategic objectives to achieve our Vision:

1. An Excellent Curriculum

a) To ensure that the Early Years provides the best possible start for pupil development.

- b) To review the balance and location of the various pathways across the school and college sites.
- c) To ensure that the school and college buildings meet Government Digital and Technology Standards in Schools. To ensure pupils have access to the most up to date technology that is appropriate for their needs, and that the staff team are proficient in the use of this technology to best support pupil learning and communication. 100% of pupils will have access to the appropriate digital device and all staff will complete annual assistive technology training.
- d) To ensure that school leavers are equipped as fully as possible, with the learning and life skills for their future educational and life needs beyond Woodlands Meed.

2. School and College Facilities, and Life Skills Centre

- a) Ensure that both sites and buildings can continue to meet the needs of a generic population and fully support a broad and balanced curriculum.
- b) Review the business and fundraising development plan for the Life Skills Centre to ensure the development of a Life Skills Centre at Woodlands Meed SEND College in Burgess Hill. The Centre aims to empower pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) by developing essential life skills through practical experience in cooking, cleaning and home and personal care skills. We aspire to have a design completed by 2026, with the planning and funding in place to start the works by 2028.
- c) Review the business and fundraising development plan for the Community Space to ensure the development of a Community Space in Burgess Hill. The Centre aims to empower pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) by developing a Community Space to enhance community engagement and provide hospitality experiences for the students at Woodlands Meed. We aspire to have a design completed by 2026, with the planning and funding in place to start the works by 2028.
- c) To ensure that the organisation is doing everything possible to become more sustainable. Governors will review the sustainability plan for the organisation. The aspiration is to be carbon neutral by 2030.

3. Develop a Supported Internship Programme for pupils 16 - 24

- a) To engage and develop meaningful relationships with local employers who can support young adults with SEND to achieve their career goals. The objective would be to grow this by 5 employers every year.
- b) To establish and maintain relationships with organisations and professionals who have the skills and knowledge of how to support young adults with SEND into paid employment, including Access to Work (or other relevant) funding.
- c) To develop a partnership with a social housing group to ensure pupils have greater opportunities for independent lives in the community of their choice.
- d) To maintain our successful working relationships with a number of departments within West Sussex County Council. To develop the Supported Internship Programme and the opportunities for volunteers.
- f) To keep reviewing the Supported Internship Business Plan to ensure that the progression pathway: *College → Internship → Employment / Supported Living / Further Training* develops and grows the number of interns by 10 per year over the life of this strategy.

4. Secure Future – Status & Finance

- a) To maximise the benefits of being a foundation school through autonomy and partnership opportunities.
- b) To review the potential impact on the school of government policy and to ensure the governing body has the facts needed to make an informed choice about change of status, taking into account current government consultation papers.
- c) To support all efforts to ensure the best funding for special education. To ensure a fairer funding system that best supports the Woodlands Meed students.
- d) To maintain a compliant school website as the “shop window” for the school. To ensure it effectively reflects the activities of the school and potential for co-operation. To provide a “go to” place for advice for parents, families and staff.

5. Best Practice

- a) To build on the teacher development programme with support for all Early Careers Teachers (ECTs) through the Professional Tutor role.
- b) To ensure that all teaching and learning is enhanced by innovative practice, through best practice in assistive technology.
- c) To ensure Woodlands Meed continues to be recognised as an exemplar of leading practice in autism, communication and careers teaching.
- d) To ensure Woodlands Meed will be recognised as an example of outstanding practice in the ‘Total Communication’ teaching approach. The staff will receive the very best communication training.
- e) To ensure Woodlands Meed is recognised as an outstanding SEND practitioner. The Meeds Send Alliance will develop a bank of resources/training/examples of good practice, to support SEND teaching across Mid-Sussex schools.
- f) To ensure Woodlands Meed is recognised as an example of outstanding practice in SEND careers education.

6. Diversity

- a) Diversity, equality and inclusion are central to the work of our Governing Body, and we recognise that our effectiveness is strengthened when we reflect the varied backgrounds, experiences and perspectives of the community we serve. We are committed to creating an environment where every governor, staff member, pupil and family is treated with dignity and respect, actively challenging discrimination, removing barriers to participation and ensuring that our decisions promote fairness and opportunity for all. This work is supported and promoted through a diverse and inclusive library service. As a Governing Body, we seek to model inclusive leadership, listen to under-represented voices and use our collective influence to advance equity across the school, believing that diversity is not only a moral imperative but a driver of better governance, richer discussion and stronger outcomes for children.

7. Wellbeing

- a) Woodlands Meed is committed to fostering a culture where the wellbeing of pupils, staff and families is actively promoted, protected and celebrated, recognising that emotional, physical and mental health are essential foundations for learning, independence and positive futures.

Pupils:

- Feel safe, understood and supported through consistent emotional regulation and communication approaches,
- Have access to trusted adults who know their needs and help them thrive,
- Benefit from calm, sensory-appropriate environments and opportunities for physical activity, outdoor learning and creative expression,
- Receive personalised wellbeing support developed in partnership with families and external professionals,

Staff:

- Experience a supportive, respectful workplace with manageable workloads and clear expectations,
- Access wellbeing focused INSET, high-quality CPD, supervision and professional support services,
- Feel valued through recognition, open communication and a positive team culture,
- Benefit from strong induction, mentoring and leadership that prioritises wellbeing,

Families:

- Feel confident contacting the school with concerns and know they will be listened to and supported,
- Receive clear, accessible communication and signposting to relevant services and invited to key events throughout the year,
- Are offered workshops, guidance and opportunities to engage as partners in their child's development,
- Experience strong support during key transitions, including post-16 and post-19 pathways,

Implementation

How we will implement our strategy including milestones and checking progress is included in the School Development Plan, School Budget, Life Skills Centre Business Plan and organisational Sustainability Plan.