

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy May 2026 – May 2027

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1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

- Ensure our school fully implements national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Set out how our school will:
 - Support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
 - Communicate with, and involve, pupils with SEND and their parents or carers in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil

2. Vision and principles

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school, which supports and encourages all children to achieve their potential in all areas of development. We believe that all teachers are teachers of SEND and in line with our Mission Statement, we have a commitment to each individual child.

Our principles are:

- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, barriers to learning and participation
- To enable all children, whatever their special educational need or disability, to receive appropriate educational provision through a broad, balanced curriculum
- To involve parents/carers in planning and supporting at all stages of their child's development
- To ensure that pupils with SEND have a voice and are given opportunities to express an opinion and that this opinion will be taken into account in matters affecting them
- To work closely with external support agencies, where appropriate, to support the needs of individual pupils.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report

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- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it

4. Definitions

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them. They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.

Disability Pupils are considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

Many children and young people who have a Special Educational Need (SEN) may also have a disability under the 2010 Equality Act. Children and young people with a disability do not necessarily have a SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition in this policy.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5. The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Types of Need

Communication and Interaction



This includes:

- o **Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)**. Children and young people with SLCN have difficulty in communicating with others; this may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to and being understood by others, difficulty understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication.
- o **Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC)**, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health



Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming **withdrawn or isolated**, as well as **displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour**. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as **attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder**.

Cognition and Learning



Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including:

- o **Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)**
- o **Severe learning difficulties (SLD)** where children and young people are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication.
- o **Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)** where children and young people are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.
- o **Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)** affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This includes a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Sensory and/or Physical Needs



Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. This includes children and young people with:

- o **Visual impairment (VI)**
- o **Hearing impairment (HI)**
- o **Multi-sensory impairment (MSI)** (a combination of vision and hearing difficulties)
- o **Physical disability (PD)**

6. Our approach to supporting children with emerging difficulties and SEN

We assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school as a normal part of our provision. We use information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We also consider any evidence that the pupil may have a disability and if so, what reasonable adjustments the school may need to make.

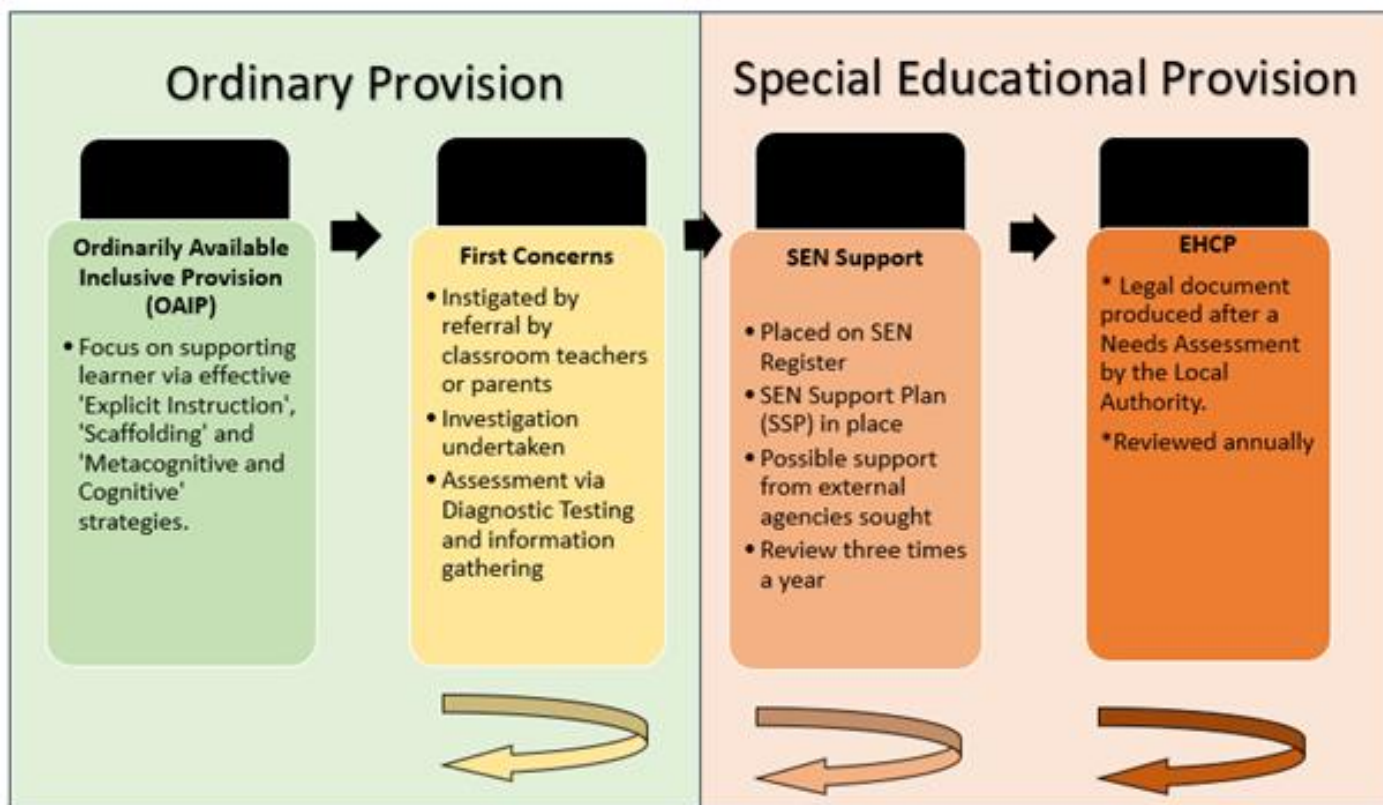
Class teachers will regularly assess the progress of all pupils and identify any whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better their previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between them and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than attainment, for example, wider development or social needs.

Interventions will be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

Our early identification pathway is identified below:



Step 1 - Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision (OAIP)

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will support the pupil's area of weakness with adaptive, high-quality teaching. At this stage children are not classified as having a Special Educational Need. Most children's needs can be met with this type of adaptive teaching support.

Step 2 – Monitoring

If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo). At this stage further assessment will take place (this may include diagnostic assessments or the gathering of information from the teacher and other adults). These emerging needs are monitored (over a term) to ascertain whether or not the child's lack of progress is due to a Special Education Need. At this stage pupils are not classified as having a Special Educational Need but assessment is taking place to consider whether the child may require special educational provision. Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN. Other potential short-term causes of impact on performance or behaviour will also be considered, such as attendance, bereavement or bullying. Staff will take particular care in identifying and assessing SEN for pupils whose first language is not English. When deciding whether the pupil needs special educational provision, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our normal, core offer of support, or whether something different or additional is needed.

7. Our approach to providing SEN support

Step 3 - SEN Support

Where children fail to make expected progress or sustained improvements after support as outlined in Step 2, we will take the necessary steps to ascertain whether this is the result of a Special Educational Need. Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age
- Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

A more detailed breakdown what would be observed in a pupil with a SEN Support level of need in each area is outlined in the SEND Cheshire East Toolkit.

SEN Support Plans

Once a special educational need is identified, parents will be formally informed and this will be recorded on the school's system. At this point pupils will receive a SEN Support Plan. This will be written by the SENDCO and class teacher in collaboration with the parents and pupil. It must include the views of all where possible in order to ensure effective support is in place. It will identify specific measurable outcomes for the learner informed by parent and pupil voice and professionals working with the pupil. It will include details of the strategies/interventions to support the achieving of these outcomes.



Where a pupil has an SEN Support Plan, it will be reviewed at least 3 times a year following the graduated approach cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review'.

At each review point, appropriate staff meet parents/carers to review progress against the set targets and set new goals. They will discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them and they will identify the responsibilities of the parent/carer, pupil and the school.

Specialist Services and teachers may be called upon to provide advice, recommendations and/or specific programmes. For example, a programme of Speech and Language work.

If strategies are successful in supporting the child's progress, they will continue to be monitored at the SEN Support level using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles.

If the barriers to learning are no longer impacting upon a child's development, a decision may be made to remove them from the SEN register and monitor them at the first concerns level. This decision would be made in conjunction with parents and with relevant assessment information to support the decision.

Where a pupil does not make adequate progress once they have received extensive personalized intervention as outlined in the SEN Support Plan, progression to step 4 may be necessary.

Step 4 - Complex

Where children are experiencing significant and complex difficulties, their need is described as complex. The impact on learning will be seen to be significant and persistent over an extended period of time. A detailed breakdown what would be observed in a pupil with a complex need is outlined in the SEND Cheshire East Toolkit.

At this stage children still have a SEN Support Plan however this may be reviewed more regularly than at the SEN Support Level. Additional and more specialised assessments may be completed and there will be greater involvement from external professionals.

Children at this stage may have an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP). If not, consideration will be given as to whether application for an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is appropriate.

If it is felt that child's need meets the criteria for an EHCP assessment the formal assessment procedures for an Education Health and Care Plan will be started by the SENCO in conjunction with the Parents/carers and other Specialist Services following the legal assessment procedures outlined in the Local Offer by Cheshire East Local Authority.

Education Health and Care plans (EHCP)

Where pupils are subject to an Education Health and Care plan, these will be reviewed at least annually by school staff in conjunction with parents/carers and specialist agencies, and this will be co-ordinated by the SENCO. Where necessary, additional personalised support will be given to enable pupils to access this process.

Each and every EHCP intervention will be evaluated alongside the school assessment system, and the school SENCO and Senior Leadership team will monitor and evaluate the use of any additional funding associated with these plans.

8. Our local offer

Cheshire East's local offer for Special Educational Needs is published on:

<http://www.stmarysmiddlewich.cheshire.sch.uk/>

Parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCO for support to gain the information they require.

Parents can also access the Cheshire East Toolkit on:

<https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/education/supporting-send-in-education/toolkit-for-inclusion.aspx>

9. Roles and responsibilities

The SENCO

The SENCO at our school is Laura Dziamarski (ldziamarski@stmrc.uk).

They will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the headteacher and SEN governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans
- Liaise with teachers and the school's Mental Wellbeing Lead, Attendance Lead and Safeguarding Lead to develop a full understanding of a child's needs and ascertain whether special educational provision is required to meet these needs
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with previous providers and potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the headteacher and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for making sure the following duties are carried out, though the duties can be delegated to a committee or an individual:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Inform parents when the school is making special educational provision for their child
- Make sure that the school has arrangements in place to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress
- Record accurately and keep up to date the provision made for pupils with SEND
- Publish information on the school website about how the school is implementing its SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Publish information about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the school's accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- Determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEND

The SEND link governor

The SEND link governor is Simon Davies. The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

The headteacher

The headteacher will:

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- Work with the SENCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes

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- Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
- Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

Parents can find additional support and information via the Cheshire East Information and Advice and Support Service (formerly Parent Partnership) at <http://www.ceias.cheshireeast.gov.uk/home.aspx>.

The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Attending review meetings
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions
- The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible

10. The SEN information report

The school publishes a SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

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The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

11. Admissions and accessibility arrangements

Admissions arrangements

The school's procedures for admission are contained within the Admissions Policy, and all children are admitted according to those criteria, regardless of SEND. A committee of Governors is responsible alongside the Head teacher for the correct administration and interpretation of the school's admissions policy and policy for Special Educational Needs. Members of the committee would seek further advice from relevant agencies to inform their decision on admission.

Accessibility arrangements

The school publishes an accessibility plan that covers how we intend to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum
- Improve the physical environment to enable disabled pupils, parents, staff and stakeholders to take better advantage of the education, benefits, facilities and services we provide
- Improve the availability of accessible information.

Our school's accessibility plan is available from the school website:

<https://www.stmarysmiddlewich.cheshire.sch.uk/page/sen/50299>

12. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the class teacher firstly, then the SENCO and the headteacher. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If the issue remains unresolved, the next step is to make a formal complaint under Formal Stage 1.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made in writing to the headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves. To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

13. Monitoring and evaluating arrangements

Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1. We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- All staff's awareness of pupils with SEND at the start of the autumn term

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- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once they have been identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued and included in the school community
- Comments and feedback from pupils and their parents

Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by SENCO, Headteacher and Governing Body every year. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year. It will be approved by the full governing board.

14. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The headteacher and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

15. Links with external agencies

The school recognises that it may not be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary the school will work with external support services such as:

- Speech and language therapists
- Specialist teachers or support services (Outreach)
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or pediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services
- CEAT (Cheshire East Autism Team)
- Play therapists

16. Overview

First and foremost, each individual's unique gifts as children of God are recognised and celebrated. We endeavour to encourage personal achievement and give recognition, praise and celebration for success. We strive to ensure that all children are given opportunities appropriate to their experience and level of understanding in order for them to make optimum progress in terms of their attainment.

SEN Support Team

SENCO: Laura Dziamarski

Governor with Commitment to SEN Provision: Simon Davies

Assessment and Monitoring Officer: Clare Cook

Educational Psychologist: Isabel Sharma

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Autism Team: Lyndsey Smith

Key Worker: Laura York

Speech Therapist: Lydia Pennant

Speech and Language Teaching Assistants: Carmen Shaw and Emma Schofield

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service: Commerce House, Dene Dr, Winsford 01606 555240

Facilities outside School available for use

Local Clinics

Speech Therapist

School Doctor

Hearing

Vision

Child Development Team

Local Playgroups

Pre-school liaison for pupils with SEND County Psychological

Service

Transport for Traveller Children Educational Psychologist

Parish (SVP)

St Nicholas High School, Hartford

Liaison for pupils with SEND Hawthorn Centre Child and

Adolescent Mental Health

CEIAS

Autism Inclusive - Crewe

Ruby's Fund - Congleton

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies; Behaviour Policy, Equalities Policy and Safeguarding Policy which can be found on the school website <http://www.stmarysmiddlewich.cheshire.sch.uk/>.

This policy was developed with the teaching staff and Governing body and is reviewed annually.

Date completed: May 2026

Review date: May 2027

SENCO: Laura Dziamarski