



## **Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy**

**2024/25**

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is an inclusive school, which supports and encourages all children to achieve. In line with our Mission Statement, we have a commitment to each individual child.

The special educational needs of any child are identified and addressed at the earliest appropriate opportunity. We will achieve early identification of SEND by:

- early contact with the parents of pre-school children and the external agencies involved
- early response to special educational needs identified after admission to school
- early response to special educational needs arising at any point during the Primary Years

### **What is SEND?**

The term "Special Educational Needs" covers a broad range of different types and levels of need. It is essential that the provision that is provided for every child at St Mary's Catholic Primary School matches their particular special educational need.

The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years (January 2015) describes the four broad areas of need as:

- Communication and Interaction
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Cognition and Learning
- Sensory Needs and / or Physical Needs

We recognise that a child may have a need in more than one area and that the level of need may vary between areas. The level or type of need may also change over time.

## Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. *SEN Code of Practice (2015, p 16)*

Our approach is in accordance with the Mission Statement and aims of the school whilst working within the procedures and practices of the Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015). Our success will be the inclusion of any child with special educational needs within the school where this is considered to be the most appropriate teaching and learning environment for his or her needs.

The objective of the Policy is to ensure that...

- the Mission Statement is upheld
- the aims of the school are met
- all children with special educational needs are given the necessary support as required and/or at times of difficulty or crisis
- all interested parties in the school (governors, teachers, support staff, parents, etc.) are aware of the school's implementation of the SEND Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs
- the promotion of high standards

The highest standards are expected for all children so that each individual achieves their potential and gains strategies for accessing the broad, balanced curriculum on offer at St. Mary's. Consideration must be given to the scope of teaching and learning methods and the resources used in order that all learning styles are catered for, and recognition and praise for success is given through the school's reward systems.

## **Admission arrangements for a pupil with known Special Needs**

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.

## **Fundamental Principles of the SEND Code of Practice (2015) which are endorsed at St. Mary's:**

- The participation of children, their parents and young people in decision-making
- The early identification of children and young people's needs and early intervention to support them
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over support
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
- A focus on inclusive practice and removing barriers to learning
- Ensuring the successful preparation for adulthood
- Provision and progress should be monitored and reviewed regularly - at least once a term using provision mapping.

## **Assessment Process**

All children are regularly assessed in order to monitor their progress. As part of these assessments children who are making less than expected progress are identified.

According to the SEND Code of Practice (2015) "This can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.

- fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress.
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap.
- As a result of identifying less than expected progress, the initial response is to ensure that the child is receiving quality first teaching targeted at their areas of need. If progress continues to be less than expected, all agencies should work together to assess if the child has SEN."

There are four broad areas of need and support:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

### **Identification of Pupils with Need**

"The benefits of early identification are widely recognised-identifying need at the earliest point, and then making effective provision, improves long-term outcomes for children." (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

Initial identification varies widely according to the area of concern.

- All children are continually tracked to check for appropriate progress.
- Parents and/or staff may raise awareness of SEND and the teacher will then take into account careful assessment of the child's difficulties, the child's need for different approaches to learning and the school and classroom setting.
- External agencies and/or parents may alert the Head teacher to areas of concern with a pre-school pupil or an existing pupil.
- A class teacher or other adult may note a change in behaviour patterns or academic progress and report to the Head teacher/SENCO.

### **The Graduated Approach**

"Where a child is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place" (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

Through a four-part cycle of assess, plan, do and review, interventions and outcomes can be assessed, reviewed and revised to meet the needs of the child.

The process can be summarised as the following:

- The class teacher is responsible for the delivery of the curriculum through quality first teaching to all children within their care.
- When a child is first identified as showing a particular need in the development of their learning the class teacher must complete a Quality First Teaching Review Sheet, identifying and evidencing all approaches that have been explored with that child. This identification and assessment will then forward the child to the next wave for further support.
- A child who has not fully responded to QFT may then be given support individually or in a group using a recognised programme such as Catch up Numeracy or personalised intervention groups with a Maths, English or phonics focus. At this point the parents should be informed by letter that their child will be taking part in the programme and be invited into school to discuss the best way they can support their child. At this point the child will also be placed onto the First Concerns register and the relevant paperwork will be highlighted to identify areas of need.
- Evidence of the child's participation in the programme should be recorded in the SEND file along with any assessments which have taken place at the beginning and end of the programme.
- If the child does not display the required outcomes of progress, the child will then move onto the SEN register and a SEN support plan will be produced for the child. They will receive individual targets and teaching strategies that are additional to the differentiated curriculum that is in place as part of provision for all children.
- If with continued support and additional provision in place, the child is still unable to make progress, the school may then move forward to request an Education, Health Care Plan. 3 cycles of individual targets on the SEN Support plan and outside agency support are required before a request can be made by the school. Further information about this process will be provided to parents where relevant.

"Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents should

consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment" (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

### **Pupil Participation**

In line with the recommendations of the CoP 2015, we will ensure that every child who has been identified with SEND will receive an opportunity to discuss and review their achievement in relation to specific objectives, thus assisting them to be able to measure their own progress. Pupil voice will be recorded every year onto the SEN Support plan and the children will be invited to take part in termly SEN Support plan meetings with parents. Target setting for every child each term will be coupled with Sen Support plan reviews. Consideration will be given to each child's wishes and we will strive to accommodate their preferences regarding working in the classroom or beyond.

### **Parental Involvement**

At St. Mary's we recognise the importance of the partnership that exists between home and school and that we share joint responsibility for promoting children's progress at all stages. It is the class teacher's responsibility to inform parents of initial concerns and they should then be involved in future action. Upon initial identification of SEND parents should be informed of the process for target setting and review meetings and the provision that will be provided for their child in school. Parent voice is recorded once per year onto the SEN Support plan and parental input is requested as part of termly target setting. All parents of pupils at St Mary's are invited to discuss the progress of their children and will receive a written report once per year. In addition to this, parents of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents. Parents can find additional support and information via the Cheshire East Information and Advice and Support Service (formerly Parent Partnership) on 0300 123 5166.

## **English as an Additional Language-EAL**

Children within St. Mary's for whom English is an additional language will be given the opportunity to develop their understanding and use of the English language through an individualised learning programme. However, it is important to recognise that "difficulties relating solely to learning English as an additional language are not SEN" (SEN Code of Practice, 2015).

## **SEND Facilities**

The design of the school is appropriate for including a pupil with mobility difficulties, wheelchair, etc. Special arrangements can be made for children with other physical difficulties including visual impairment, partial hearing, anaphylaxis and Downs Syndrome. We have installed a hoist and plinth to allow wheelchair access to toilets. We employ staff who are trained in handling techniques.

## **Role of the SENCO**

The effectiveness of the SENCO is vital to ensure good communication between class teachers and parents and the head teacher in order to gain maximum benefits for the children concerned. The SENCO is also supported by a Teaching Assistant whose role it is to ensure that support is consistent in approach and delivery, that the Graduated Approach continues to be updated and that evidence of the children's progress is available.

The following is a brief synopsis of the role of the SENCO:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively liaising with parents of pupils with SEN

- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the head teacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

If you would like to make an appointment with the SENCO or Head Teacher to discuss concerns regarding Special Educational Needs, this is possible via the school office.

### **In-service Training**

- A whole school awareness of the policy and procedures is best met by arranging In-house Training to include Teaching and Support Staff and Governors.
- Staff from External Agencies to give seminars for all staff on the Special Needs of particular children - e.g. Epi Pen training, asthma.
- In Curriculum Development, striving for a broad and balanced curriculum, to strive for differentiation which includes the Special Educational Needs of any child experiencing learning difficulties or with particular strengths.
- Training for specific needs as necessary.

### **Resource Allocation**

Schools have an amount identified within their overall budget, called the notional SEN budget. It is for the school to provide high quality appropriate support from the whole of its budget and determine their approach to using their resources to support the progress of pupils with SEN.



## **Our Local Offer**

Cheshire East's local offer for Special Educational Needs is published on <http://www.stmarysmiddlewich.cheshire.sch.uk/> and 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 Local offer which can be found at <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities.aspx>

Cheshire East SEND toolkit can be found at <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/education/supporting-send-in-education/send-toolkit.aspx>

## **SEN Profile**

In line with the Cheshire East SEND Toolkit, the level of need in each area of need is categorised as being at one of the following stages:

- No Concern
- First Concerns
- SEN Support
- Complex
- Specialist

Advice from other professionals may be sort at all levels of this process.

## **Identifying children with SEND**

In accordance with the Cheshire East Toolkit, St Mary's Catholic Primary School follows the procedure described below when identifying pupils with SEND. The stages are progressed through in order and we aim for maximum parental engagement at all levels.

## Step 1 - Quality First Teaching

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support and/or interventions from teaching assistants and other specialist staff.

High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have, or may have, SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.

Senior leaders, including the SENCO regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered. Where children fail to make the expected or sustained progress in response to quality first teaching, we will progress to the first concerns stage.

## Step 2 - First Concerns

Pupil progress is carefully monitored through high quality and accurate formative and summative assessment, using a range of standardised tests, and the school's own assessment system. Currently, we are using the NTS assessment programme. Where there are emerging concerns about a child's development in any area, this is discussed between the parents and class teacher.

The SENDCO is informed of the discussion and a record of discussion is completed. If

concerns persist, a first concerns profile is completed. This includes their current position, difficulties and specific strategies to be used to remove the barrier to learning.

The overriding purpose of this early action is to help the pupil achieve the identified outcomes and remove any barriers to learning, thus enabling the child to reach their full potential. A record of first concerns will be held by the school at this stage.

A detailed breakdown of what would be observed when a pupil has a need at the first concerns level can be found in the SEND Cheshire East Toolkit.

The first concerns profile is reviewed after 6 weeks. If strategies are successful in supporting the child's progress, they will continue to be monitored at the first concerns level. If concerns have resolved, no further action will be taken. If a pupil does not make adequate progress once they have received intervention outlined in the first concerns profile, alternative strategies may be suggested and reviewed another 6 weeks later.

If the impact on learning and pupil's progress is still inadequate once they have received specific intervention / adjustments, consideration will be given as to whether the child has a special educational need.

Consideration of whether special educational provision is required starts with the desired outcomes for the learner. This includes clarifying the expected progress and attainment the pupil needs to make, and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents/carers.

Additional assessment information may be gathered at this stage to aid judgement.

Pupils are only identified as having SEND if they do not make adequate progress once they have received interventions/adjustments and good quality personalised teaching.

We aim to build considerable parental involvement into this process in order to maximise learning situations.

### 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 personalised 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 Educational 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.

### **Conclusion**

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.

### **St Mary's Special Needs Support Team:**

SENCO: Laura Dziemarski

Governor with Commitment to SEN Provision: Ian Camacho

Assessment and Monitoring Officer: Charlotte Ashley

Educational Psychologist: Joe White

Autism Team: Lyndsey Smith

Key Worker: Jessica Davies

Speech Therapist: Moi Zhendonq

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: January 2025

Review date: January 2026

SENCO: Laura Dziamarski