



# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

## St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Part of the Our Lady of Walsingham Catholic Multi Academy Trust

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

Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENCo) and the SEN information report

## **1. School Arrangements**

### **1.1. Introduction**

St Mark's school has high expectations for all children. The school seeks to raise achievement, remove barriers to learning, and increase physical and curricular access for all. All children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) are valued, respected and equal members of St Mark's Catholic Primary School.

***A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.***

***A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she: has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools***

***(Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years January 2015)***

## ***‘Every teacher is a teacher of SEND’ – N Packer 2014***

The school believes that all children have an equal right to a full and rounded education which will enable them to achieve their full potential. As such, provision for pupils with SEND is a matter for the school as a whole. The Governing Body, Headteacher, SENCo and all other members of staff have important responsibilities relating to SEND. Further information on how this policy is used is detailed in our SEN Information Report which can be found on the school website.

### **1.2. Aims and Objectives**

The aims of the policy reflect the SEND Code of Practice (2015). The school's mission statement, teaching and learning policies and the National Curriculum inclusion statement:

- to have high aspirations and expectations for all children with SEND
- to use our best endeavours to ensure that children with SEND get high quality provision that meets their needs
- to place emphasis on early intervention to ensure the best outcomes for each child
- to enable all children with SEND to have access to all elements of the school curriculum, and to ensure they engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- to ensure that children and parents participate as fully as possible in decision making, and that they are provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation
- to use a rigorous cycle of assessment and planning to ensure children with SEND are making good progress
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the process, including the governing body, teaching and support staff and parents
- to identify the roles and responsibilities of staff in providing for children's special educational needs.

### **1.3. Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **1.3.1. The Governing Body's responsibilities:**

- to have due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with special educational needs
- to identify a governor to have specific oversight of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.
- to ensure that the SENCo is a qualified teacher working at the school; and that if they have not held the post of SENCo for more than 12 months they must achieve a National Award in SEND within three years of appointment.
- The SEND governor will:
  - help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
  - monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability 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

#### **1.3.2. The Headteacher's Responsibilities:**

- to have responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's provision for children with SEND
- to inform governors of the school's SEND provision, including the deployment of funding, equipment and personnel
- to work closely with the school's SENCo and ensure that they have sufficient time and resources to carry out the role effectively.

#### **1.3.3. Class Teachers' Responsibilities:**

- to be aware that all teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff
- specialist teachers to be aware of the needs in each class – have access to provision maps, regular discussions with class teachers and SENCo
- to make the best use of teaching assistants
- to provide Quality First Teaching to meet the needs of and have high expectations for *all* pupils
- to work closely with teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- to work with the SENCo to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision
- to enact on strategies as outlined in the Suffolk Mainstream Inclusion Framework [SMIF Sep 24](#).
- ensure they follow this SEND policy

***'Every moment and interaction can be an intervention' – Dr Karen Treisman 2020***

#### **1.3.4. The Special Education Needs Co-ordinator is Mrs Kate Taylor**

The responsibilities of the co-ordinator are:

- to manage and implement the day-to-day operation of the policy
- work with the Headteacher and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- to co-ordinate the provision for children with SEND
- to liaise with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after child has SEND
- to advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- to advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- to liaise with parents of pupils with SEND
- to be a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services

- to liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- to work with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- to monitor the quality and effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND
- to ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.
- to collaborate with the class teacher to identify children with SEND as early as possible, including in EYFS, and apply for additional needs funding as appropriate.
- to support class teachers to address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

#### **1.4. Admission Arrangements**

No pupil will be refused admission to school on the basis of their special educational need. In line with the SEND and Disability Act, we will not discriminate against disabled children and we will take all reasonable steps to provide effective educational provision.

## **2. Identification, Assessment and Provision**

### **2.1. Allocation of Resources**

The school has an amount identified in its overall budget, called the notional SEND budget. In addition to this, the school applies for top-up funding for some pupils with SEND through the High Tariff Funding process.

The school's SEND budget is used to provide a range of support and resources for children with SEND. This may include:

- targeted interventions and programmes of support
- staffing
- equipment e.g. speaker system to improve classroom acoustics for children who have hearing impairments, equipment to aid with motor skills – cutlery, chairs, writing aids;
- staff training

### **2.2. Identification, Assessment, Provision and Review**

**2.2.1.** The emphasis in the school is on the early identification of a child's special educational needs. Strategies used by the school to identify pupils with SEND are:

- Pupils are assessed upon beginning school in Reception, and information is gathered about each child through home and nursery visits. Where there is a previously identified special educational need, the SENCo will arrange a transition meeting prior to starting school. We place a great deal of emphasis on early intervention for children with SEND. However, some difficulties only become apparent as children develop, and we identify such difficulties through a rigorous process of assessment.
- The school tracks all children's progress through rigorous assessment and data analysis. Assessments include (but are not limited to) teacher assessments each half term using assessment against the National Curriculum, ongoing phonic assessments, and termly whole class reading, mathematics and spelling assessments.

- Termly, progress tracking meetings are carried out between SLT and each class teacher and support staff to identify any children who are not making the expected progress or are achieving below expected levels. Where a pupil is not making the expected progress, the first response is high quality teaching targeted at their area of need. Where progress continues to be less than expected, or where parents or teachers have expressed concerns regarding a pupil's needs, the SENCo and class teacher will consider whether the pupil has a special educational need.
- Discussions will take place with parents/carers to gather information about the pupil's strengths and difficulties, any concerns the parents may have, the agreed outcomes for the child, and the next steps. Consideration of whether special educational provision is required will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents.
- Additional assessments may be carried out for children with SEND to identify specific areas of difficulty, and to track progress more closely.
- Referrals for assessment or advice may be made to the local authority for educational psychologist or relevant health professionals e.g. Children's and Adolescent's Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- Advice may be sought from the health authority or a speech and language therapist or other relevant professional e.g. Advisory Teacher from Suffolk Specialist Education Services (SES)
- Identifying and assessing SEND for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. The school will look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEND or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEND.
- Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEND. However, they may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. Equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed, may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, or emotional or behavioural difficulties.

### **2.2.2 Broad Areas of Need**

The Code of Practice 2015 lists four broad areas of need which are helpful when identifying a child's need and planning effective provision to meet their needs. These areas are:

#### **Communication and interaction**

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them, or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different, and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.

Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication, and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

### **Cognition and learning**

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia.

### **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**

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. Schools and colleges should have clear processes to support children and young people, including how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour so it does not adversely affect other pupils. The Department for Education publishes guidance on managing pupils' mental health and behaviour difficulties in schools.

### **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. These difficulties can be age-related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Information on how to provide services for deafblind children and young people is available through the Social Care for Deafblind Children and Adults guidance published by the Department of Health. Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

### **2.2.3 The provision for children with Special Educational Needs is in line with the Code of Practice:**

The school will:

- always use its best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need
- ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
- designate a qualified teacher to be responsible for co-ordinating SEND provision

- inform parents when they are making special educational provision for a child
- prepare a SEND information report and the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps being taken to prevent disabled children from being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to enable access to the school for disabled children and the accessibility plan showing how the school plans to improve access progressively over time.

### Education Health Care Plans

Some children need more intensive and specialist help. If a child does not make progress despite the SEND support, an Education, Health and Care needs assessment (EHCNA) might be the next step. See more at: [Education, Health, and Care \(EHC\) Needs Assessments and Plans - Suffolk SEND Local Offer](#)

### 2.2.4 Individual Education Plans and One Page Profiles

All pupils with SEND will have a One Page Profile. This captures key information on a single page to give staff an understanding of the child and how best to support them.

Children with SEND will also have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that details the outcomes expected for the child, the special educational provision (including teaching strategies and resources), the timescales for provision and the progress that has been made.

IEPs are reviewed every term. These are working documents and targets will continually be assessed and reviewed by practitioners who are delivering the interventions. Class teachers will liaise with parents to review outcomes and set new targets. Pupil voice is also gathered as part of the process. As far as possible, children are aware of their targets and are involved in the target setting process. If targets are met within this time frame, in which case, new targets are added to the IEP.

### 2.3. Curriculum Access and Inclusion

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 states that:

***All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with SEND and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum.***

***(Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years January 2015, 6.12 p94)***

We aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations for all our children. This is achieved through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. As a Suffolk school, we use the Suffolk Mainstream Inclusion Framework to support our provision and next steps [SMIF Sep 24](#).



We encourage all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. The needs of the child may be caused by intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional, or behavioural difficulties and may be short or long term. Special educational needs may be found in one or more of the four key areas of need and we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- require different styles of learning
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- may have medical conditions which may result in extended or frequent absence
- may have emotional/social circumstances which may put pupils at risk of developing special educational needs

#### **2.4. Evaluation**

The use of the School's SEND Self-Evaluation of special education needs will be used to judge the effectiveness of the school's SEND policy and provision. Key objectives will feature in the school improvement plan to improve provision and expertise. The SEND Governor also acts as a critical friend and holds the school account on processes and outcomes.

#### **2.5. Complaints Procedure**

The school and its staff aim, wherever possible, to resolve differences and disagreements locally. In the first instance, problems or concerns should normally be discussed with the class teacher, SENCo, SLT and/or the Headteacher. This discussion might be via informal day-to-day contact, an arranged appointment, IEP reviews, or parents' evenings. Further advice on complaints procedures can be found in the school's complaints policy on the school's website.

### **3. Partnership within and beyond the school**

#### **3.1. Staff Development and Performance Management**

- the SENCo will inform new staff of the school's procedures for pupils with special educational needs
- the school is committed to developing the expertise of all staff through the mechanism of the School Improvement Plan and the Performance Management Cycle
- training will be made available for the SENCo, the Headteacher and the Governing Body
- in-service training may be arranged by SLT
- Specific CPD is available to staff who support children with specific, complex needs.

#### **3.2. Involving Specialists - Links with Education Department Support Services and other agencies and organisations**

##### **Educational, Health and Social Care Services**

- Comprising the Cognition & Learning, Communication & Interaction, Sensory & Physical, Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Whole School Inclusion Services, the Specialist Education Services are part of Suffolk County Council.

- They work together to support schools and children with SEND across the whole of Suffolk in a variety of different ways, including support for children with visual and hearing impairments, dyslexia, behaviour needs, communication difficulties and others.

Specialist Education Services (SES) | Community Directory ([suffolk.gov.uk](http://suffolk.gov.uk))

- Communication & Interaction (C&I) Service
- Sensory & Physical (S&P) Service
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Service
- Whole School Inclusion (WSI) Service
- Inclusion Services Meeting

These include:

Educational Psychology service

Educational Welfare Officer

Therapists (Speech and Language therapists, occupational therapists, and physiotherapists)

Hearing/Visual Impaired/Sensory Impairment Advisors

Medical services (usually via parent GP/School Nurse)

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

Mental Health Support Team

The school recognises the effectiveness of collaborative multi-agency work and works to ensure there is good communication. Permission is always sought from the parents before a referral is made.

### **3.3. Partnership with parents**

- Partnership with parents is always a priority and the school encourages parents or guardians to be fully involved in all aspects of their child's education and so we will seek the views, wishes and feelings of both the child and parents.
- Parents are always informed throughout the school-based stages of assessment
- Suffolk LA has a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service or SENDiass. This is a confidential and impartial support and advice service for parents, carers, children and young people (up to 25 years) on issues related to Special Educational Needs and Disability. See more at: [www.suffolksendiass.co.uk](http://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk)

### **3.4. Pupil Participation**

The school has an obligation to actively seek the views, wishes, and feelings of all pupils about their education. As far as they are able, pupils are invited to contribute to the assess, plan, do and review process.

### **3.5. Links with other schools and Transfer Arrangements**

The school will always make contact with the high school prior to transfer, in order to plan collaboratively for transition. Transition planning takes into account each child's individual needs and may include additional visits or the opportunity to meet particular staff members. For children with an EHCP it is desirable that a representative from the high school attend the annual review prior to transfer, but this will depend on whether a place has been allocated. The school will always ensure that staff from the high school visit St. Mark's to meet children and discuss their needs with teachers and the SENCo, prior to transfer.

### **3.6. Links with other schools and Transfer Arrangements**

### **Policy Review Arrangements**

This policy was reviewed and updated in October 2025 in line with the Code of Practice and will be reviewed annually.