



The  
**Holy Spirit**  
Catholic Multi Academy

*'With grace and humility, glorify the Lord by your life.'*

# Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

This policy applies to St Thomas More Catholic Academy & Sixth Form College part of The Holy Spirit Catholic MAC

This Special Education Needs & Disabilities Policy has been approved and adopted by The Holy Spirit MAC on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Policy Ratified on: 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021

Signed by the Chair of the  
Education Standards  
Committee

Signed by the Principal

Next Review: July 2022



## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy**

*(Referred to as SEND throughout this policy)*

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### **SEND Co-ordinator with Operational Responsibility for SEN:**

**Mrs I Gaffney** - BA Hons English Language and Literature, PGCE; Advanced Certificate in Education: Specific Learning Difficulties; Postgraduate Certificate in Education: SEN Leadership. (In post 21 years so not required to undertake National Award for SEN)

### **Member of Senior Leadership Team with Strategic Responsibility for SEN:**

**Mrs L Thomas** – Principal  
**Mr D Sherratt** – Assistant Principal

### **School Mission Statement**

“As part of the Catholic Church, our mission is to serve the needs of all pupils in a Christ-centred way so that they may reach their full potential in all aspects of their lives”.

### **Aims of the SEND Policy**

A central part of the school's mission statement is that all pupils are valued equally regardless of abilities or disabilities. The school seeks to ensure that all pupils reach their potential and that achievement at all levels of formal assessment and examination is recognised and celebrated. All pupils should have access to full curriculum experiences and appropriate courses at Key Stage 4. It is our aim that all pupils leave the school with the best possible skills for life. Involvement in school life and extra-curricular activities is expected and encouraged. The school aims to use its resources in the most effective way possible to meet the needs of all pupils

### **Compliance**

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (Sept 2014) 3.65 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (Sept 2014)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions April 2014
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document Sept 2013
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Teachers Standards 201

This policy has been co-produced by the SENDCO working jointly with other stakeholders, such as:

- Pupils with SEND
- Parents of pupils with SEND
- The Senior Leadership Team
- The SEND Governor

**Objectives to ensure our aims are met:**

- To work within the obligations and the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014 and its spirit of collaborative working.
- To respond to the identified SEND of pupils admitted to the school
- To identify and provide for other pupils who have SEND or additional needs
- To operate a whole school approach to the management and provision of support for SEND
- To provide a SEND co-ordinator to manage the SEND policy and be responsible for its day to day operation
- To have a member of Senior Leadership Team with responsibility for SEND at a strategic level
- To use the funding provided to the school for SEND so that it maximises support and provision
- To have a nominated Governor with responsibility for SEND who meets with the SENDCO and reports back to full Governors on SEND issues.
- To circulate information on individual SEND issues as efficiently as possible so that staff are kept updated
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils with SEND
- To provide training for staff on the main SEND areas of need
- To respond to concerns expressed by parents/carers and work with them in a supportive role to resolve issues
- To ensure the school makes maximum and effective use of the support and systems provided by the Local Authority and external agencies

**Identifying SEND**

We work within the definition of SEND given in the Code of Practice:

A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. The pupil will therefore have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions.

The SENDCO and other school staff will work closely with colleagues in Primary schools to gather relevant information at point of transition. Some pupils will already have their needs clearly identified through having an education, health and care plan (an EHCP). Other pupils will have received provision at primary school as part of school-based Support. Information relating to pupils' SEND will be stored securely in the Learning Support Department, SENDCO's office, with reference made to this information on the central store of pupil files.

Particular regard will be given to pupils who did not reach nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 in the English/Literacy assessments and in Maths by a significant margin; this will be viewed by the school as a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.

Some pupils with SEND will have additional needs throughout secondary school, which is usually the case for pupils with EHC plans. For other pupils, if better than expected progress is made, they will no longer be regarded as needing provision different to the majority of pupils. The SENDCO and learning support team will review additional needs at the start of each school year and at regular intervals during the year or as new information comes to light.

Not all pupils with SEND will be successfully identified at the point of transition and some pupils may develop SEND needs during secondary education. Concerns can be raised at any time by school staff, parents or pupils themselves and it will be the responsibility of the SENDCO, assisted by other staff, to listen, gather evidence, arrange any assessments considered necessary and respond accordingly. Staff are encouraged to be part of an ongoing process of sharing information and concerns as part of their responsibilities for the pupils they teach. Early identification is always regarded to be in the best interests of the pupil.

The Code of Practice now defines SEND tightly and staff must consider what factors are not SEND, but may have impacted on progress and attainment, such as:

- Disability (the Code of Practice outlines the "reasonable adjustment "duty for all settings and schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation – these alone do not constitute SEN).
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked After Child
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman

Behaviour is no longer regarded as a special need in itself but may be part of a pupil's response to an underlying problem.

The school will describe SEND in terms of the four broad areas of need described below and used in the Code of Practice, accepting that pupils sometimes have needs which cut across these areas:

### **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 particular 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. In practice, pupils with SLD or PMLD are unlikely to be educated in a mainstream school setting.

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.

### **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.

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support

### **A Graduated Approach to the Provision of SEN Support**

Subject and pastoral teachers and leaders should make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. 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

It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance social skills.

The first response to such progress will always be high quality teaching and pastoral care targeted at areas of weakness. Teachers are responsible for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from a teaching assistant. This is part of a school's universal provision for all pupils.

The school places a high priority on developing the skills of all teachers to meet the majority of pupils' additional needs within their classrooms through:

- Teacher training days which focus on developing skills
- Continuing Professional Development programme
- Performance management target setting
- Focused learning walks and visits to lessons
- Access to training from external providers where a need has been identified

Additional intervention and support will always be supplementary to good quality teaching. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENDCO should consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress.

Sometimes, it will be necessary to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals. The SENDCO is responsible for coordinating the visits of professionals from specialist services and prioritising the pupils with whom they should work. In the main, external professionals will be from the Local Authority's Specialist Teaching Service or Educational Psychology Service, which are both subscribed to by the school.

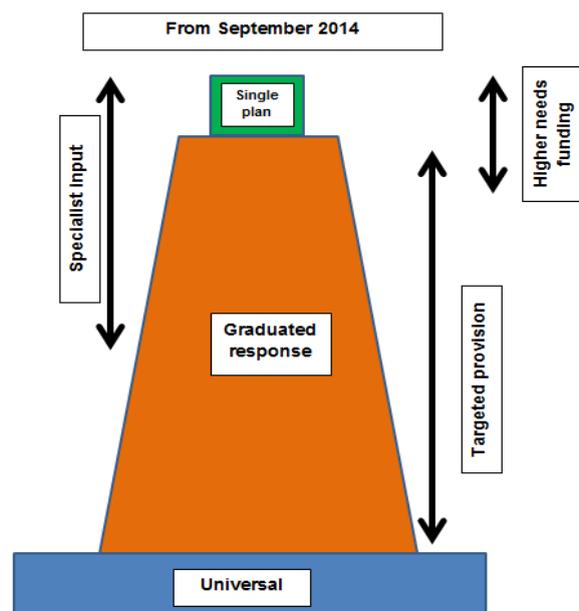
Discussions will also take place with parents at this stage, although in practice these will usually have already begun at point of transition or at parents' consultations and other meetings.

If it is felt that special educational provision should be made for a pupil, an approach of **ASSESS-PLAN-DO-REVIEW** should be used to decide on the outcomes needed for the pupil and the intervention(s) to be put in place as part of **TARGETED** provision.

Some pupils will need a higher level of provision than others. A pupil's needs often change at different stages and the provision they require will vary. Where a pupil does not make progress even with targeted intervention, consideration will need to be given to increasing or changing the intervention. At this more intensive level, the interventions will be **SPECIALISED** provision and might involve outside agencies, but not always. Some of these pupils will have EHC plans.

At the highest level of provision will be pupils for whom additional funding is received from the Local Authority from its High Needs Block. This will either be part of a pupil's EHC plan, or will have been secured through submission to High Needs Funding Panel of a costed education plan for the individual.

Pupils with additional needs who do not have an EHC plan will be regarded as being at the SUPPORT stage of the Code of Practice. The graduated response to SEND and the structure implicit in the code of practice is illustrated in the figure below:



Sometimes pupils will have a level of need which is just below SUPPORT, but requires something additional to UNIVERSAL provision. In these cases, all staff will be made aware of the learner's needs.

The SEND Code of Practice does not provide definitive criteria or threshold as to where entry to SUPPORT begins; schools are given responsibility for defining SUPPORT criteria in the light of a school's particular circumstance.

## Managing Pupils' Needs

Details of pupils receiving SEND provision will be recorded on a register of additional needs which is maintained by the SENDCO and Learning Support staff. It will be available to all staff via the shared area, SEND section. The register will be drawn up early in the Autumn term each year to take account of new pupils joining the school and end of year attainment data from the previous school year. The register will be reviewed at key points during the year.

Some pupils on the additional needs register, and certainly those who have EHC plans, will have a Personal Profile which describes their strengths, weaknesses, provision, barriers to learning and suggested strategies to overcome these. The profiles will be circulated to all staff teaching the pupil. The profile will be reviewed and amended at a pupil's annual review meeting.

The SENDCO will arrange annual review meetings for all pupils with EHC plans in accordance with the Code of Practice. The reviews will be timed to coincide with assessment and reporting arrangements in school. Reviews for other pupils receiving support for additional needs will be arranged as necessary by the member of staff with key responsibility; this could be the SENDCO; Head of Year or staff from the Pastoral team depending on the circumstances. Typically, these may take place at parents' consultation evenings.

A small number of pupils may graduate through the SUPPORT phase to require additional support and provision of a more specialised nature. In these cases, the school can request that the local authority undertake a statutory assessment of SEND. The school would need to gather together all the evidence relating to the pupil using the Local Authority's documentation. As part of this process, the school must describe the support provided, the outcomes achieved and must demonstrate how resources have been committed to support the pupil's needs. The Local Authority will consider such referrals at regular panel meetings. It is the responsibility of the SENDCO to understand this procedure and keep updated on Local Authority policy.

### **Managing and Distributing Information**

A key responsibility for the SENDCO and the learning support team will be to ensure all staff in school are given relevant information about pupils' SEND. Information will be provided on secure staff areas of the school's system; through hard copies made available to staff; by regular reminders and updates in the staff bulletin and information distributed to staff through whole school briefing sessions.

The school has a duty to provide a SEND Information Report which provides easily accessible details of its SEND provision.

For parents/carers who require further information or advice, the SENDCO can guide them to the relevant local services.

Admission arrangements to the school are available on the school website and are printed in the school's prospectus which is available from the school office.

## **Transition**

It is recognised that pupils with SEND will need additional support at points of transition:

- **Primary to Secondary:** The SENDCO and other staff will visit Primary schools to share information and attend reviews prior to transfer to Secondary school. In addition to the County induction day, additional visits and activities will be organised for small groups of identified pupils who may be vulnerable at point of transition.
- **Between Key Stages:** There will be opportunity at annual review meetings to plan for a smooth transition to the next key stage. In Year 8 and 9, review meetings will be held to coincide with option choices. For students entering the Sixth Form, the SENDCO will work with the Head of Sixth Form and pastoral staff to ensure support is in place.
- **Between School and Post 16 Providers:** The SENDCO provides information to local colleges and training providers who will often attend Year 11 annual review meetings or transition “handover” meetings.
- **Within Year Transfers:** Where pupils with SEND are moving to another school, as much information as possible will be shared with the new school to ensure a smooth transfer. Equally, when pupils are admitted in year, all efforts will be made to meet or speak with previous school staff to gather the relevant information.

## **Training and Resources**

SEND is funded in line with Local Authority policy on the delegation of the notional SEN budget for each school and the allocation of funds from the High Needs Block. The Head Teacher, SEND Strategic Lead and the School Governors plan how SEND resources are utilised within school to maximise the impact of funding.

The SENDCO will take responsibility for the day to day allocation of the SEND resources and will have regard to using the resources in the most efficient manner possible to maximise how the school meets the needs of all its learners with SEND.

In order to maintain and develop the quality of teaching and provision to respond to the needs of all pupils, all staff are required to undertake training and development.

The school’s SENDCO will attend the local SENDCO Network Meetings in order to keep up to date with local and national developments.

The schools in the Academy of the Holy Spirit MAC have a SENDCO group which meets termly to share good practice and develop common responses to SEND issues where relevant.

The school is a member of the National Association for Special Educational Needs (NASEN) and benefits by being kept updated through its journals and training materials.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

In addition to the SENDCO, there are several other staff with related responsibilities, with whom the SENDCO will work closely:

- There will be a named SEND Governor
- There will be a Designated Safeguarding Lead and a team of Deputy Safeguarding Leads to lead on safeguarding
- There will be a named designated teacher for Looked After Children
- There will be a member of staff with responsibility for Pupil Premium Funding and related issues
- There will be a member of staff with responsibility for meeting the medical needs of pupils

The SEND policy will be reviewed in line with school procedures for reviewing policies.

Complaints with regard to the SEND policy should be made according to the school's published complaints procedure.

**Please also refer to the Accessibility Audit & Plan 2021 by clicking [HERE](#)**