



# Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

**St Thomas CE Academy**

(Awaiting Trust Board ratification)

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| <b>Approved by:</b>        | Trust Board | <b>Date:</b> July 2023 |
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## Mission Statement

**Teach children in the way they should go and when they are older, they will not depart from it**

Children are at the heart of everything we do. Through Christian values, relationships, living and learning together we celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of everyone in our family. We nurture a sense of self belief, mutual respect and belonging to build the foundations for happy and successful lives

## 1. Aims

Our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEND)
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with special educational needs (SEND)

At St Thomas CE Academy, we take pride in taking on an inclusive approach, meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We ensure all children are made to feel welcome and part of our school family. We work with Birmingham Local Authority to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress in school. We want the best for all children in school, including those with SEND and we aim to make sure all children are happy and safe. To ensure this happens we believe in three fundamental values:

- **Open and honest communication** - Relationships are the heart of everything we do. Honest communication between parents, carers, staff, pupils and any other individuals working in partnership with school is essential to create a positive learning experience for children.
- **A partnership approach** - To ensure children get the best support in school possible it is important that everyone involved works together. We will involve parents/carers in discussions about children's progress and the support they need.
- **Appropriate and effective teaching and learning** - All teachers hold high expectations for all children in their class including those with SEND. All teaching is carefully planned and based on building on what children already know, can do and can understand. Teaching is adapted to meet the needs of all children in the class. Children's progress is closely monitored so that if any extra support or adaptations are needed, they are responded to effectively.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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 (SENDCOs) and the SEND information report
- 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 sets 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

- The [Governance Handbook](#), which sets out governors' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The [School Admissions Code](#), which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

### 3. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At St Thomas CE Academy, we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their need, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

### 4. Definitions

#### 4.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for 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 the majority of the 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.

#### 4.2 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.

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

#### 4.3 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.

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

| Area of Need |  |
|--------------|--|
|--------------|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Communication and interaction</b>       | <p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall into this category.</p>   |
| <b>Cognition and learning</b>              | <p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers.</p> <p>A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia</li> <li>• Moderate learning difficulties</li> <li>• Severe learning difficulties</li> </ul> <p>Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment</p> |
| <b>Social, emotional and mental health</b> | <p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder</li> <li>• Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder</li> <li>• Suffered adverse childhood experiences</li> </ul> <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>  |
| <b>Sensory and/or physical</b>             | <p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment</li> <li>• A physical impairment</li> </ul> <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>   |

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

### 5.1 The SENDCO

Our SENDCO is Sarah Williams, who can be contacted via email at [s.williams@allsaintsmat.school](mailto:s.williams@allsaintsmat.school).  
The SENDCO will:

- Work with the Executive Headteacher and the SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Inform any parents/carers that their child may have SEND and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made.
- 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 SEND, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents/carers, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the pupil and their parents/carers 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 SEND and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner.
- Work with the Executive 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.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.
- With the Executive Headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the Executive Headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access and co-operate with the local authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEND information report and any updates to this policy.
- With the Executive Headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison, with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

## **5.2 The Local Academy Board**

The Local Academy 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 local authority 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/carers 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 SEND 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 SENDCO 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.

### **5.3 The SEND link governor**

The SEND link governor is David Lyall.

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 Executive Headteacher, Head of School and SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

### **5.4 The Executive Headteacher**

The Executive Headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school.
- Work with the SENDCO and local authority board 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 local authority to support individual pupils.

- Make sure that the SENDCO 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 local authority when a pupil needs an EHC plan needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review.
- With the SENDCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.
- With the SENDCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access and co-operate with the local authority in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer.
- With the SENDCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEND, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching.

### 5.5 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.
- 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.
  - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school.
  - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil.

### 5.6 Parents and carers

Parents and 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 SEND 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.

### 5.7 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 considered in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

### 5.8 The local authority local offer

Our local authority's local offer is published here: <https://www.localofferbirmingham.co.uk>

## 6. SEND information report

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

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

## 7. Our approach to SEND support

### 7.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

We will assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment when they start at the school. This will build on information from previous settings and Key Stages, where appropriate. We will 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.

When teachers identify an area where a pupil is making slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with adapted, high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENDCO to have an initial discussion about whether this lack of

progress may be due to a special educational need. Where necessary they will, in consultation with the pupil's parents or carers, consider consulting an external specialist.

Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND.

Potential short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance will be considered, such as bullying or bereavement. Staff will also take particular care in identifying and assessing SEND 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 core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

If a pupil is joining the school, and:

- Their previous setting has already identified that they have SEND.
- They are known to external agencies.
- They have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

then the school will work in a multi-agency way to make sure we get relevant information before the pupil starts at school, so support can be put in place as early as possible.

## **7.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents/carers**

The school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents/carers. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty.
- We consider any concerns the parents have.
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child.
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are.

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents/carers.

We will formally notify parents if it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

## **7.3 The graduated approach to SEND support**

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEND, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

### **1. Assess**

The pupil's class teacher and the SENDCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents/carers will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

## **2. Plan**

In consultation with the parents/carers and the pupil, the teacher and the SENDCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on our Arbor and will be made accessible to staff in a school-based support plan.

Parents/carers will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

## **3. Do**

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

The SENDCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

## **4. Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents/carers and pupils.
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes.
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil.

The teacher and the SENDCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

## **7.4 Levels of support**

### **School-based SEND provision**

Pupils receiving SEND provision will be placed on the school's SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

### **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan**

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEND provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the local authority (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

### **7.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision**

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEND by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEND support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENDCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents/carers

## **8. Expertise and training of staff**

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The Executive Headteacher and the SENDCO 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.

## **9. Links with external professional agencies**

The school recognises that it won't 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
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

## 10. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the SENDCO. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents/carers are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the Executive 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.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

## 11. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

### 11.1 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
- 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/carers

### 11.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the SENDCO **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

## 12. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents:

- SEND information report
- [The local offer](#)
- Accessibility plan
- [Behaviour policy](#)
- [Medical policy](#)
- [Attendance policy](#)
- [Child protection and safeguarding policy](#)

- [Complaints policy](#)