



POLICY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Our Mission

“Living and Learning Together in the Love of Christ”

At St. Thomas More, the learning experiences of the children are rooted in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The search for academic success and the need to become the best person we can be can only be achieved by nurturing all of our pupils with the love, support and guidance required by them, through working in partnership with home, school, parish and wider communities.

SENCO Key Contacts

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Introduction

This policy has been written with regard to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice: 0-25 years (Sept 2014) and the Equalities Act (2010).

Principles

The principles of this policy and guidelines involve:

- A focus on raising attainment
- A commitment to raising the level of expectations/attainment for all pupils with SEND
- The importance of equality of opportunity
- Early identification and intervention
- Working in partnership with parents/carers
- Supporting inclusive practice
- Endorsing the ‘support and aspiration’ model of the SEN Green Paper (2011)

Aims

At St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School we provide teaching and learning which enables all children to gain access to a broad, balanced, and appropriately differentiated curriculum. Our aim is to ensure all children are supported in order that they may work confidently towards reaching their full potential. Policy and practice reflects the philosophy and fundamental principles within the SEND Code:

We aim to enable our pupils with special educational needs to reach their full potential, to be included fully in their school community and make a successful transition to adulthood.

- A child with special educational needs should have their educational needs met
- The views of the child should be sought and taken into account
- Parents/carers support their child’s education
- Children with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum.

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Provisions at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School starts with quality first teaching and close regard is made to the statutory requirement that all teachers:

- Set suitable learning challenges
- Respond to pupils' diverse learning needs
- Overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School acknowledge the view that children with learning difficulties learn and make progress most effectively by being taught and supported in a familiar environment by their teachers and teaching assistants through good 'quality first teaching'. This might be interpreted as a tracking back through literacy objectives as appropriate, using access strategies and choosing appropriate teaching and learning styles. The provision for the majority of pupil's will be made from the school's own resources. If the degree of difficulty is severe and is causing or accompanies other complex needs, a request to the local authority to consider a statutory assessment might be deemed appropriate and additional funding requested.

Equal Opportunities

The staff of St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School believes that all members of the school should be treated with respect; have individual, diverse needs recognised, and be given the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of age, ability, religion, gender or culture.

To achieve our aims we will:

- Identify need as early as possible and provide effective support
- Adopt a whole school approach to the identification, assessment and provision for children with special educational needs
- View our special needs provisions as an ongoing, developing process
- Provide appropriate in-class support, which enables all children to have access to the whole curriculum, including the New Curriculum framework
- Incorporate special educational needs procedures including individual educational plans (IEPs) into curriculum planning
- Develop an effective partnership between school, parents/carers and outside agencies
- Encourage children and parents/cares to participate in decision-making about provision to meet their special educational needs
- Ensure that assessment and record-keeping systems provides adequate means of recording attainment and achievement and gives sufficient information for carefully planned progression at every stage
- Involve the Governing Body and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, in the regular review, development and evaluation of policy and guidelines
- Ensure all those involved with children with special educational needs work as a team to support the pupil's learning
- Track and monitor provision and procedures which have been put into place to ensure children with SEND make significant progress as they move through the school

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND THE AREAS OF NEED

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty, which 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; or
- Have a disability, which 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.

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Children's needs and requirements may fall into at least one of four areas, though many children will have inter-related needs. All areas of need will have a varying degree of impact upon the pupil's ability to function, learn and succeed.

The areas of need are:

Communication and Interaction Difficulties

Children may have speech and language delay, impairments or disorders, specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, hearing impairments or autistic spectrum disorder.

Cognition and Learning Difficulties

Children may demonstrate features of moderate, severe or profound learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia and require specific programmes to aid progression in cognition and learning. Such requirements may also apply to some extent to children with physical and sensory impairments and autistic spectrum disorders.

Emotional and Social Development Difficulties

Children may be withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lack concentration or present with immature social skills.

Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties

Children may have profound and permanent deafness or visual impairment or lesser, or temporary levels of loss. They may have physical impairments arising from physical, neurological or metabolic causes requiring access to specific facilities or equipment. Their difficulties may cause them emotional stress or physical fatigue.

Children experiencing difficulties in any one or a combination of these areas may be entered on either the school's Medical Register or SEND Register or both.

The following are not considered SEN, but may impact on progress and attainment:

- Disability
- 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

Any concerns relating to a child or young person's behaviour is an underlying response to a need which, St. Thomas More will be able to recognise and identify clearly what provision needs to be made.

The school identifies the needs of pupils by considering the whole child and not just the SEN of the child or young person.

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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

The Governing Body, in consultation with the Head Teacher, determines the school's policy and approach to provision for the pupils with special educational needs, establishes the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintains a general overview of the schools work.

The Governing Body, having regard to the Code of Practice:

- Ensure appropriate provision is made for any pupil with SEND
- Reports annually to parents/carers on the school's policy for children with SEND
- Ensure all children; including those with SEND have access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum
- Appoints a representative of the Governing Body to oversee SEND provisions
- Ensure discussion with parents/carers regarding SEND matters at relevant meetings
- Ensure that pupils with SEND are fully involved with school activities
- Ensure they are involved in developing and reviewing SEND policy

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for special educational needs. The Head Teacher keeps the Governing Body informed of all developments with regard to SEND. The Head Teacher informs parents/carers of the fact that SEND provisions has been made for their child.

Admissions

The admission arrangements for the school treat children with SEND who do not have a statement of SEND exactly the same as for all other children and are administered with the guidance set out in the Admission Arrangements published by the Authority. A copy of the Admissions Arrangements is available from Staffordshire. The school's admission criteria is available from the school.

Admission Arrangements:

The school requests school records including Assessments; Child Protection file (where appropriate), and details of any SEND including pupil profiles and the most recent IEP when a pupil is transferring from another school.

SENCO

The role of the SENCO in St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School is part of a team responsible for monitoring the progress of our pupil's with additional needs and ensuring appropriate provision is in place where pupils are falling behind in their learning. Liaising with school staff, parents and pupils and coordinating provision is an important component of our SENCO's role.

As part of the identification process the SENCO collates the following information, which helps build up the profile of the pupil:

- Health details, e.g. general health vision, hearing, emotional factors
- Attendance
- Home language
- Assessment information
- A record of consultation with pupils, parents/carers and support services (where applicable)

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- Adjustment made to improve performance
- Observation in the classroom to help identify strengths and areas of difficulty
- Pupil's independent work, teaching and learning styles
- Reading/writing/spelling skills – persistence and severity of problems
- Phonological awareness – phoneme-grapheme correspondence, sound blending
- Monitoring progress using Early Learning Goals, 'P' Levels – where appropriate, NC assessment, standardised tests
- Assessment for learning
- Monitoring Individual Education plans (IEP) targets/reviews
- Information relating to interventions and strategies that have been used with outcomes and evidence of progress
- Involvement of the pupil in monitoring their own progress

Following the gathering of this information a profile can then be built of the pupil, which will support the class teacher in incorporating appropriate strategies and inform future planning and provision.

In addition the SENCO:

- Oversees the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- Ensure an appropriate budget allocation to meet SEND
- Interprets legal requirements for staff, parents/carers and governors
- Coordinates and evaluates provision, including interventions, for children with SEND
- Liaises with and advises teachers whenever necessary
- Monitors and evaluates the quality of provision
- Oversees the records of all children with SEND
- Maintains the SEND provision map
- Liaises with parents/carers of children with SEND
- Organises and delivers INSET in order to meet the needs of staff
- Liaises with external agencies including Advisory Teachers for SEND, Educational Psychologists, Specialist Support Team Staff, Education Welfare Officers, Attendance Support Workers, Behaviour Support Workers, school health services, social service and other key statutory and voluntary agencies that work in specialist areas in Staffordshire.

Teachers

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. (Code of Practice, DFE, 2015, 6.36)

Teachers and support assistants will:

- Be aware of the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of, and subsequent provision for, pupils with SEND
- Work with the SENCO to decide the action required to assist the pupil to make progress
- Work with the SENCO to collect all available information on the pupil
- Develop and review IEP's for pupils
- Work with SEND pupils to deliver the individual programme set out in the IEP/APDR cycle
- Develop effective relationships with parents
- Encourage pupils to participate in decision-making
- Be involved in the development of review of the school's SEND policy
- Continuously assess pupil progress and identify the next steps to learning
- To keep parents informed of pupil progress
- Work with SENCO to identify their own training needs around SEND

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Teaching Assistants

- Provide relevant support to identify pupils
- Develop positive working relationships with parents and professionals
- Assist with the recording, monitoring and evaluation of pupil's progress
- Assist with the identification and effective provision of appropriate INSET
- Work alongside the SENCO and teaching staff in preparation of IEPs/APDR cycles

Liaison between Teaching Support Staff, and Class Teachers

Timetables showing in-class support and intervention within classrooms across the school are prepared on a regular basis and there are regular curriculum planning meetings between relevant members of staff.

Pupil Participation

The school actively encourages the involvement of children in their education and will

- Involve the pupil in decision making regarding the methods by which their individual needs will be met
- Invite the pupil to attend all or part of review meetings
- Encourage the pupil in the implementation of the IEP
- Involve the pupil in the implementation of the IEP
- Aim to further develop the pupil's self-confidence and self-esteem

Parent/Carer Participation

The school actively encourages and recognises the rights of parents/carers in terms of their involvement in the provisions for their child's special educational needs and will

- Involve the parents/carers in decision making regarding the methods by which their child's individual needs will be met
- Invite the parent/carers to attend all review meetings
- Discuss the purpose of assessment arrangements and the implication of the Individual Education plan (IEP) with the parent/carers providing them with a copy of the IEP
- Encourage the parent/carers to be actively involved in working with their child to achieve the targets set in their IEP
- Aim to further develop the parent/carers' confidence in the provision made for their child's special education needs

PROCEDURES

SEN Support

- Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
- Quality first teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who may have SEN.
- Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of quality first teaching.
- The school regularly and carefully reviews the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement.

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- The school reviews and, where necessary, improves, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.
- When the school decides whether to make special educational provision, this will involve the teacher and SENCO. They will consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This will include high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials.
- For higher levels of need, the school draws on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.
- The school applies ASSESS – PLAN - DO – REVIEW cycle to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Parents, families, children and young people are involved in this process through discussions and meetings at the review stage?

Early identification / monitoring progress / adjusting teaching

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 SEN and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum. (Code of Practice, DFE, 2015, 6.12)

Pupils are identified as SEN if they do not make adequate progress once they have had all the interventions / adjustments and good quality personalised teaching.

When the school decided whether to make SEN provision the following considerations are made:

- The decision-making progress should involve the SENCO and the class teacher
- The use of high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials to inform decision making
- The gathering together from within the school information about the pupils progress alongside national data and expectations for progress
- For higher level of need the involvement of external agencies and professionals and any specialised assessments
- The assess, plan, do review cycle has taken place at least twice

Managing Pupils needs on the SEN register

The school operates a termly cycle for assessing, planning, delivering, reviewing and recording provision for pupil with SEN. This is mainly achieved through IEP/EHC plan. This identifies the pupil's individual needs, how to remove key barriers and clear outcomes to be achieved within an agreed timeframe.

The class teacher takes responsibility for these plans and ensures they are maintained and updated. The teacher holds a responsibility for evidencing progress according to the outcomes described in the plan.

The SENCO ensures these plans are up to date and reviewed termly.

If the school identifies it is unable to fully meet the needs of a pupil through its own provision arrangements then support is sought through the work of other outside specialist agencies.

If the school identifies that additional support is needed school will apply to the Local Authority for additional funding.

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Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision and the SEND Code of Practice (2014) is followed.

The arrangements in place in school to support pupils at school with medical conditions are contained in our school policy for supporting children with medical conditions.

Monitoring and Evaluation Of SEND

The school's practice is to regularly and carefully monitor and evaluate the quality of provision we offer all pupils.

We do this by regular audits, sampling of parent views, pupils views and staff views. The evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils.

In Service Training

The SEND Policy and Guidelines are subject to regular whole school review and evaluation. One meeting each term, to which designated governor is invited, is set aside to discuss and review SEND issues. The SENCO (Head Teacher/Mrs Allcock) attends relevant courses and ensures all staff are familiar with developments in SEND. All staff must notify the SENCO if they need further training in school procedures or support for children. Training for both teaching, and non-teaching staff is provided as necessary and the SENCO ensures all staff are aware of training available. Priorities for training with regard to SEND will be specified within the School Improvement Plan. The SENCO gives feedback to the Governing Body on SEND provision at termly governor's meetings. Governors have access to SEND training.

Sharing Experience and Good Practice

As a school we are part of a Staffordshire wide education community. We meet together at regular intervals and share good practice. There is a special South Staffordshire wide network for SENCO's.

Complaints Procedure

We will always be open to receiving either compliments or complaints from parents/carers of children with SEND within the school. In the first instance these should be relayed to the SENCO either by calling for a discussion or to make an appointment or by writing to the school.

Telephone Discussion

Complaints can usually be easily and quickly dealt with by a telephone conversation, but staff may find it difficult to get the phone during the normal working day.

Meeting in School with SENCO

In the unlikely event that this does not allay parent concerns, then the next stage would be to organise a meeting in school with the SENCO (Mrs Allcock) to discuss this further.

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Meeting in School / Discussion with Head Teacher

If parents are still not satisfied that their concerns have been resolved then they should either phone the Head Teacher for a conversation or appointment to meet, or put your concerns in writing.

Role of the Governors

Governors determine, support, and review school policies. They support the aims of the policy by making resources available wherever possible. Governors receive termly reports, which they use for monitoring purposes. The Governing Body delegates the responsibility for implementing policies and guidelines to the Head Teacher.

How resources are allocated to and amongst pupils with special educational needs

The LA and school work together to establish sound arrangements for monitoring and accountability to ensure that resources are used to raise the achievement of pupils with SEND. Resources for meeting SEND are used in a number of different ways.

The school recognises that children have different degrees of difficulty, so that the additional support they receive will depend upon how great their difficulty is. Children with greater need receive more support. This is called **continuum of need** and match to a **continuum of support**.

St. Thomas More takes its duties regarding SEND very seriously and commits significant resources to meeting children's individual needs.

The resources that we allocate are:

- Based on our professional assessment of the level of the difficulty the pupil is experiencing in relation to other children the same age.
- Compared with those of similar schools to ensure that we are not out of line
- Moderated through advice, help and support from the central SEN support services in Staffordshire who routinely work across a number of schools

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of SEND Policy and Guidelines

This document is subject to annual review as part of the cycle of whole school self-evaluation. All staff are involved in the review, development and evaluation of the SEND policy and guidelines including the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for children with special educational needs. Its effectiveness is considered in light of the following performance indicators:

- Levels of differentiation by task and by outcome reflected in weekly planning and evident in lessons observations
- Measurable progress made by individual children
- Monitoring reports on classroom observations
- Termly evaluations of the quality of IEPs /APDR cycles
- Collation of children's and parent's/carer's comments following review meetings

Policy adopted on: November, 2024

Review Date: November, 2025

Signed:

Diane Jones

: Designed Chair of Governors