St Mary's
Catholic Primary School

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY
2026 - 2027

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1. School Mission

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School our mission is:

TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS
BY
LEARNING TOGETHER
LOVING OURSELVES
LOVING EACH OTHER
LOVING ALL PEOPLE
LOVING LIFE ITSELF
AND CONSTANTLY STRIVING FOR
EXCELLENCE
WORTHY OF OUR GOD GIVEN GIFTS.

2. Introduction

This SEND policy promotes the successful inclusion of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) at St Marys Catholic Primary School by providing an inclusive education in a safe and happy environment.

At St. Mary's, we aim to ensure that we fully implement national guidelines and legislation regarding pupils with SEND. (Page 10)

This policy is integral to other school policies including the SEND Information Report Assessment policy, Teaching and Learning, Accessibility Plan, Equal Opportunities, and all curriculum guidelines.

The school SENDCo is Mrs S Birchenall.

Provision for children with Special Educational Needs is a matter for the whole school. In addition to the governing body, the head teacher and SENDCo, *"All teaching and support staff are teachers of children with Special Educational Needs."*

This policy sets out how St. Marys will:

- Support and make provision for pupils with SEND and disabilities
- Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
- Liaise with both children and their parents/ carers involving them with decisions about support and provision
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of class-teachers and the SENDCO
- Make sure this policy is shared and understood by all staff

Inclusion and equal opportunities

At St Mary's we want all our children to realise their full potential and to optimise their self-esteem. We value all children in school equally and our guiding principle is one of inclusion. We strive to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment that offers all pupils a broad, balanced, and challenging curriculum, making reasonable adjustments and using adaptive practice where necessary.

3. Definition of Special Educational Needs

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that children have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty that calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty if they have:

- A *significantly greater difficulty* in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- A disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

Special educational provision is educational provision that is *additional to*, or *different from,* that made generally for children of the same age by mainstream schools

English as a second language (EAL)

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English, requires particular care. Where there is uncertainty about an individual child, teachers will look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different subjects to establish whether the barriers to learning they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command of the English language or arise from Special Educational Needs.

4. The Four Areas of Need.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) states that there are four broad areas of SEND:

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

5. Aims

- Provide all children with access to a broad and balanced curriculum meeting the statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum
- Seek children's views and take them into account
- Early identification of children with Special Educational Needs which are clearly communicated to all staff
- Include children with Special Educational Needs in all aspects of school life
- Focus on outcomes for children with SEND with consideration of their starting points of learning
- Provide where necessary a balance of whole class high quality teaching, small group teaching and individual support
- Prepare suitable interventions matched to each child's needs with the relevant resources
- Provide a range of teaching strategies and effective differentiation
- Provide appropriate support and training to all staff
- Encourage parents to understand and support their child's learning at home and at school
- Liaise and consult with outside agencies where appropriate
- The children's needs will be assessed, planned for, provided for, and regularly reviewed
- Reasonable adjustments are made in line with the Equality Act

6. Roles/ Responsibilities

Meeting the needs of pupils with SEND requires partnership working between all those involved – school, parents/carers, pupils, external agencies, and the local authority.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCO)
The responsibilities of the SENDCO are:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs policy
- Coordinating provision for children with special educational needs
- Overseeing the records and Individual Education Plans, making referrals to outside agencies, and requesting statutory assessments
- Liaising with class teachers, parents, and outside agencies.
- Conducting Annual Reviews for children with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP).
- Liaising with SENDCOs of other schools/consortia to keep up to date with SEN developments.
- Providing advice and facilitating training for teachers and support staff.
- Maintaining the School SEND Information Report
- Maintaining and updating the SEND Record – a list of all pupils registered as having SEND and recorded on the school census
- Monitoring the progress and attainment of pupils with SEND

Class-teachers are responsible for:

- Checking on the progress of **all** pupils and identifying, planning, and delivering any additional support underachieving pupils may need
- Ensuring that the school's SEND Policy is followed in their classroom
- Updating the Language & Literacy and Maths Toolkits and using this to inform planning and target setting
- Writing pupil IEPS and sharing and reviewing these at least once a term with parents and the SENDCo
- Working in partnership with parents / carers, the SENDCo, teaching assistants and agencies to support individual pupils.
- Knowledge of the pupil and their achievements across all areas
- Having an awareness of EHC Plans for any pupils in their class
- Setting high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment

7. Safeguarding

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) states:

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain medical or physical health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges both online and offline. Governing bodies and proprietors should ensure their child protection policy reflects the fact that additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect and exploitation in this group of children.

These can include:

• assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration

• these children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children

• the potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs

• communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges risks that they do not understand that what is happening to them is abuse.

• the needs for intimate care or that these children are isolated from others,

• that these children are more likely to be dependent on adults for care, and

• these children may have issues over cognitive understanding – being able to unable to understand the difference between fact and fiction in online content and then repeating the content/behaviours in schools or colleges or the consequences of doing so.

Any reports of abuse involving children with SEND will therefore require close liaison with the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) and the SENDCO or the named person with oversight for SEND in a college.

Schools and colleges should consider extra pastoral support and attention for these children, along with ensuring any appropriate support for communication is in place

St. Mary's **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy** can be found in the policy section of the school website.

8. Entering the school

On entry to the school, each child's current levels of attainment will be assessed to ensure that they build upon the pattern of learning and experience already established during the pre-school years. If the child already has an identified Special Educational Need, this information will be transferred from the Early Years setting and the SENDCO and the child's class teacher will use this information to:

- Provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum
- Identify and focus attention on action to support the child within the class
- Use the assessment processes to identify any learning difficulties
- Ensure ongoing observation and assessment
- Provide regular feedback about the child's achievements and experiences to form the basis for planning the next steps of the child's learning
- Involve parents in implementing a joint learning approach at home.

9. Identification and assessment of children with Special Educational Needs

Once a pupil has been identified as possibly having SEN, they are closely monitored by staff to gauge their level of learning, strengths, and possible difficulties. The child's class teacher then takes steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities and/or classroom adaptations that will aid the pupil's academic progress and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied.

The SENDCo will be consulted as needed, for support and advice and may wish to observe the pupil in class or carry out additional assessments. Subsequently, it can be determined which level of provision the child will need going forward.

A referral to the SENDCo can be carried out at any point during the academic year. Class-teachers, through continuous observation and assessments, will become aware that a child has additional learning and/or emotional needs. A concern might be raised by staff at school, parents/carers. The Class Teacher will then fill in an Initial Concern Sheet called a 4 plus 1 form.

Parents are informed fully at every stage of their child's development and the circumstances under which they are being monitored. They are encouraged to share information and knowledge with the school in order that school have a full picture of the child's strengths and needs.

10. The Graduated response

The school adopts a *graduated response* in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This takes the form of a four-part cycle (**assess, plan, do, review**) through which decisions and actions are reviewed and refined. This should provide a growing understanding of the pupil's strengths and areas of difficulty and of what provision and additional support the pupil requires in making good progress and securing good outcomes.

The graduated response recognises there is a continuum of SEND and brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing.
Difficulties are categorised into four areas of need. They are:

1. Cognition and learning
2. Social Emotional and Mental Health needs
3. Sensory and/or physical
4. Communication and interaction

However, pupils may not fall into one distinct area of need.

11. SEND Support - Individual Education Plans

If, despite high quality teaching and intervention over time, a child is struggling to make progress, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) may need to be put in place. This will be written in collaboration with the SENDCO, Class Teacher, and parents. The IEP will outline the additional provision needed, which goes beyond high quality teaching, that the child will receive in school to promote accelerated progress.

The IEP sets out the following:

- three/ four specific individual short -term targets for the child to work towards
- 'targeted' and 'specialist' support, teaching strategies and resources
- additional adults working with the child.
- interventions
- review date (termly plan) in consultation with parents and children (where appropriate)
- outcomes (to be recorded when IEP is reviewed) and new targets agreed

Most provision for SEND support at school will be provided within the classroom. Extra help may be provided outside the classroom, where appropriate, but within the context of the Foundation Stage or the National Curriculum. The progress of children will be monitored closely by the class teacher, SENDCO and Senior Leadership Team.

12. Specialist Support

If the school has evidence that a child is making insufficient progress despite significant and appropriate intervention and IEPs, they may require specialised support. This is when outside agencies become involved, working with the child, teachers, teaching assistants, parents / carers and SENDCo. The outside agencies may provide advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials. They may administer more specialist assessments or observations that can inform the planning and measurement of a child's progress.

Parental permission is always sought before involving outside agencies.

The school receives regular visits from our SEND Consultant for Literacy, Language Learning and Strategic Support Team (LLSS) and the Communication and Autism Team. We also consult with the following agencies to help identify and support pupils with SEND:

- Speech and Language Support (SALT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Forward Thinking Birmingham (FTB)
- Educational Psychologists (EP)
- Sensory Support Team (SST)
- Physical Support Team (PST)
- Other health professionals

13. SEND Support Provision Plans

If, despite additional and different support over time, targeted interventions, and the involvement of outside specialists, the child is still not making as much progress as they should, the SENDCO, in consultation with the class teacher and parents, will seek advice from appropriate outside agencies. A decision may be made to escalate the level of the SEND Code of Practice.

SEND Support Provision Plans (SSPP) are exclusive to the Birmingham Local Authority. They demonstrate the provision being put in place for children where their needs are complex and require multi-agency involvement, but where the provision does not yet require an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) to support delivery within a mainstream setting. The graduated response must have been followed in conjunction with outside agency support when making the application. All cases will be considered at a local sharing panel of specialists from the local authority.

SEND Support Provision Plans can also be used by the Local Authority as the mechanism by which mainstream settings can apply for additional 'top up' funding to support provision for the child in school.

14. Request for Statutory Assessment

In a very few cases if a child is demonstrating significant cause for concern despite the graduated response and a SEND Support Provision Plan, a request for an Education Heath and Care Plan will be made by the school to the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review Service (SENAR) who will then consider the school and educational and health care professional's evidence. This will decide the nature of provision necessary to meet the child's SEND. SENAR will also request the pupil and parent views.

15. Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

If a statutory assessment finds that the child has more complex needs, the Local Authority will prepare an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP)

An ECHP is a legal document which details the education, health and social care needs of a child or young person for whom extra support is needed in their early years setting or school, beyond that which the school or setting can provide.

Children with an EHCP will have outside agencies involved in their support, such as Education Psychologists, Local Authority SEND Support Services, and/or health services and are usually entitled to extra resources in their current school or setting. Sometimes, children with an EHCP may require their needs to be met in a specialist provision such as a Resource Base or Special School.

EHCPs are reviewed annually, with parents and any third parties involved, and the outcomes reported to the Local Authority's Special Educational Needs Assessment & Review Service (SENAR).

16. Arrangements for partnership with parents

The SEND Code of Practice for children and young people 0 to 25 years states:

"Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 makes clear that local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the Act in relation to disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs (SEN), must have regard to:

• the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
• the importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions
• the need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood."

The school will always inform parents when their child is receiving help for Special Educational Needs

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling pupils and young people with SEN to achieve their potential. At St Mary's, we recognise that parents hold key information and have knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best ways of supporting them. All parents of pupils with Special Educational Needs will be treated as partners, supported to play an active and valued role in their child's education.

Parents of any pupil identified with Special Educational Needs may contact the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) for impartial and confidential information, support, and advice.

Email: SENDIASS@birmingham.gov.uk
Phone: 0121 303 5004

17. Pupil participation

Children with Special Educational Needs often have a unique knowledge of their own needs and circumstances and their own views about what sort of help they would like to help them make the most of their education. They will be encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes at an age-appropriate level including the setting of learning targets and contributing to their individual education plans.

18. Transition to Secondary School

We have developed strong links with SENDCOs in local secondary schools. Our liaison with secondary SENDCOs aims to discuss the needs of our pupils with SEND to ensure the smoothest transition possible into secondary education.

The success of the provision St Mary's Catholic Primary School offers to children with Special Educational Needs will be judged against their development as wholesome young persons - who have participated actively in living out the virtues of the Catholic Faith as part of our school community - and their academic progress and outcomes.

The policy complies with the following legislation and will be reviewed annually.

- 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 school's responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health, and care plans (EHCPs)
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20),which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Governance Handbook which sets out governor responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 Statutory guidance for schools and colleges, which schools and colleges in England must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*
- *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), which sets out what is expected of organisations and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*

October 2026
For review: October 2027

Related policies:
Teaching and Learning, Inclusion, Equal Opportunities, Pastoral Care, Safeguarding

Appendix 1

Code of Practice Definition of Special Educational Needs

Extract from the Code of Practice (2015)-

"Special educational needs (SEN)

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

xiv. 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions

xv. For children aged two or more, 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, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.

For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.

xvi. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph xiv. above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

xvii. post-16 institutions often use the term learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). The term SEN is used in this Code across the 0-25 age range but includes LDD.

Definition of Disability

"Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '…a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'.

This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer.

Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN.

Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

xix. The Equality Act 2010 sets out the legal obligations that schools, early years providers, post-16 institutions, local authorities and others have towards disabled children and young people:

• They must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass, or victimise disabled children and young people

• They must not discriminate for a reason arising in consequence of a child or young person's disability

*• They must make **reasonable adjustments**, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, to ensure that disabled children and young people are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers. This duty is anticipatory – it requires thought to be given in advance to what disabled children and young people might require and what adjustments might need to be made to prevent that disadvantage*

• Public bodies, including further education institutions, local authorities, maintained schools, maintained nursery schools, academies and free schools are covered by the public sector equality duty and, when carrying out their functions, must have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between disabled and nondisabled children and young people."

It should be noted that pupils may fall within one or more of these definitions.

Pupils with a disability will have special educational needs if they have any difficulty accessing education and if they need any special educational provision made for them.