

# Policy for Special Needs

St. Thomas More's Catholic Primary School



Approved by the Governing Body:

Autumn 2026

Next Review:

Autumn 2028

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## **Mission Statement**

**As we walk with Jesus, we love, live and learn.**

### **Our aims are:**

- to provide an appropriate and high quality education for all children which gives a broad, balanced, stimulating, academic and social curriculum regardless of race, disability, gender or ability;
- to create an environment where all children can feel safe and appreciated as we believe all children should feel equally valued;
- to respond to all the children in our care in ways that take into account their varied life experiences and needs. We recognise that all children learn at different rates and there are many factors which may affect achievement, including ability, emotional state, language and maturity;
- We know and understand that many of our pupils at some time may experience difficulties which affect their learning and this may be short or long term. We aim to identify these needs and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable them to achieve their full potential.

## **Special Educational Needs and Provision**

There are four areas of special educational need:

- Communication and interaction: includes speech and language; ASD
- Cognition and Learning: includes severe learning difficulties; moderate learning difficulties; profound and multiple difficulties; specific learning difficulties
- Social, Mental and Emotional Health: includes children who have an emotional, social or mental health need that is impacting on their ability to learn. Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP) is the Essex approach to understanding behaviour and supporting emotional wellbeing.
- Sensory and/or Physical: includes visual impairments, hearing impairments; multi-sensory impairment and physical difficulties.

**SEN provision is additional to or different from that made generally for pupils of the same age. This means provision goes beyond the differentiated/scaffolded approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high quality and personalised teaching.**

Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean a child has SEND, however consistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours may be an indication of SEND and an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues should take place. Other factors that may impact on progress and attainment:

- attendance and punctuality,
- disability,
- health and welfare,
- English as an additional language,
- being a looked after child,
- a child of a parent in the armed forces.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**Head-teacher/Senior Management team should ensure:**

- strong teaching and learning is taking place,
- regular meetings with the SENCO,
- accurate assessment and identification of pupils,
- a well-designed curriculum that is accessible for all pupils,
- close tracking and monitoring of progress including pupil progress meetings with individual teachers.

**Governing body will:**

- ensure necessary provision for pupils with SEND is made,
- ensure the school has a SENCO,
- make sure parents are informed if their child is receiving SEND provision but does not have an EHCP,
- publish SEND information which outlines the school's SEND policy, admission arrangements for disabled pupils and the schools accessibility plan.

The Governor with a responsibility for SEND is Mrs Carmel Lo

The designated teacher for Child Protection is the Headteacher Mrs Bridget Harris.

The member of staff responsible for managing pupil premium and looked after children funding is the Headteacher Mrs Bridget Harris.

**The SENCO:**

- oversees the day to day operation of the SEND policy,

- coordinates provision for all children with SEND and those who have Education, Health Care Plans,
- advises on a graduated approach to providing additional SEND support,
- advises on the deployment of the schools delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively,
- liaises with parents and children with SEND,
- liaises with early years' providers, other schools, Educational Psychologist and social care professionals,
- is a key point of contact with external agencies especially LA and LA support service,
- liaises with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and his/her parents/carers are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned,
- works with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements,
- ensures that the school keeps up-to-date records of all children with SEND.

## **Graduated Response**

The graduated approach is at the heart of whole school practice as we are continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing our approach to teaching all our children.

High quality teaching, differentiation/scaffolding for individual pupils is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND as it is every teacher's responsibility to adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils. Teachers will use the Ordinarily Available Inclusive Teaching Framework to consider their practice and look for ways to make their teaching ever more inclusive. All vulnerable learners will be included on a provision map which outlines and monitors all additional intervention across the school. The benefits of early identification are widely recognised, then providing good evidence based interventions improves long-term outcomes for the child.

A clear understanding of a child's needs is a critical precondition to planning effective strategies and creating appropriate provision.

### **1. Early Identification and assessment includes:**

- analysis of data including baseline assessments and standardised tests,
- our initial concerns form completed by the class teacher,
- classroom based assessments and the experience of the pupil by the teacher,
- the pupils' own views,
- following up on parental concerns, their views and experience,
- tracking progress over time in comparison to their peers,
- analysing information from feeder nurseries on entry to school, previous schools and other services.

## **2. The 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' process.**

The decision made to place a pupil on our SEN register follows the advice from the Essex Provision Guidance Tool and The Ordinarily Available Targeted Support document.

The school will follow the 'Assess, Plan, Do and Review' process. The expectation is set out in the Children & Families Act 2014 that local authority and educational settings place parents and young people at the heart of the process. The school takes the One Planning approach. A person centred review meeting will be offered following the model:

- an introduction of who is present,
- discussion which may include what we like and admire about the pupil, what is working well/not so well and what is important to the child,
- discussion about what has been written/said so far,
- outcomes and actions will be agreed by those present.

The plan will then be reviewed on a termly cycle with parents and pupils. This is known as a "one planning approach."

The school will consider involving outside agencies when it is clear the children's needs require intervention which is additional or different from the well differentiated curriculum offered for all pupils in the school, i.e. they have a special educational need as defined by the SEN Code of Practice 2014. On rare occasions where a pupil has a significant, severe and sustained need, it may be necessary to enter a multi-disciplinary assessment process with health and social care to consider the need for an Education Health Care Plan. The LA will conduct an assessment of education health and social care needs and prepare a EHC plan when it considers that the SEN provision cannot be provided for within the resources normally available to mainstream schools.

### **3. Statement of SEN or EHCP**

Pupils with an EHC plan will also have an Annual Review. Our school will comply with local arrangements and procedures when applying for an EHC plan. The criteria to commence a statutory assessment of SEN:

- effective one planning is in place,
- effective interventions are being implemented from the Essex Provision Guidance and The Ordinarily Available Documents,
- the school is using its allocated SEN funds,
- the child has exceptional, severe or complex needs that are likely to be long term.

The assessment and planning process should usually take no more than 20 weeks. EHC Plans will focus on outcomes for the child and set out how services will work together. The plan will put the child and parents at the centre of decision making. The process of planning targeted provision for a pupil with a statement or an EHC plan is firmly rooted in the graduated approach. As the needs of these pupils are more likely to be more complex and the approach needs to be more personalised and individualised. We ensure:

- all staff working with children read and understand the statement or EHC plan and any specialist reports;
- a clear range of strategies and approaches to support the child is agreed by all involved based on specialist advice;
- any additional training for staff is arranged;
- teachers monitor progress towards agreed outcomes regularly;
- the SENCO monitors progress termly with all relevant staff parents and pupils;
- a person-centred Annual Review is held yearly.

### **Access to the Environment**

Please read details of our plans and targets for improving environmental access in the school's Accessibility Plan.

### **Complaints Procedure**

We aim to resolve any issues swiftly and in person often coming to a mutual understanding and agreement. We encourage parents and carers to talk to us rather than worry or bottle up concerns. Our complaints policy is on our website or is available from the school office on request.

Please also refer to:

Behaviour Policy

Policy for Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs.

Inclusion Statement

SEND School Information Report