



ST.MARK'S CE SCHOOL

ONE SCHOOL - SERVING ALL - THROUGH EXCELLENCE

St Mark's CE School

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

2024 – 25

**Date: Autumn 2024
Review: Autumn 2025**

Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

SENCOs:

Mrs Jilly Razzell (Primary - working Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday)

Mrs Laura Barker (Secondary - working Wednesday, Thursday and Friday)

SEND Governor:

Mrs Gerry Gibbs

Southampton City Council SEND case officer:

Mr Michael Purdy

Our school SEND Policy and SEND Information Report are based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) and the following legislation and guidance, reports:

- **Southampton Children & Learning Service Southampton Ordinarily Available Provision Guidance** Supporting schools to deliver inclusive education
- **Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014**, and associated regulations which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND and disabilities
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014**, which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinator (SENCOs) and the SEND information report
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013)**: Statutory guidance from the Department for Education which sets out what is expected of organisations and individuals to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- **Equality Act 2010**: Advice for schools: Non-statutory advice from the Department for Education, produced to help schools understand how the Equality Act affects them and how to fulfil their duties under the Act
- **Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils (2012)**: Technical guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission
- **Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)**: statutory guidance from the Department for Education
- **SEND Review: Right support Right place Right time (2022)**
- **Autism in Schools Project** <https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/autism-schools>

Definition of Special Educational Needs

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

(See p4 of Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0- 25 years).

Special Educational Provision means:

*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 nurseries, mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early year providers. For children under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.*

(See p5 of Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0- 25 years).

Rationale

At St Mark CE School we believe that every child deserves equal access to opportunities and that education has the capacity and the possibility to change lives for the better. Here teaching and learning is built upon a foundation that is inclusive, supportive, challenging and empowering. We promote high expectations, aspirations and an intense engagement in learning. This supports learners in establishing the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge through which they will be able to achieve success, gain fulfilment in the future and become life-long learners.

Children have special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for all the children in their classes and ensure high quality inclusive teaching, including adaptive teaching, by planning lessons that ensure that there are no barriers to every student achieving. Therefore “teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the students in their class, including those with SEN and those who access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff that compliments the expertise of their class teacher. High quality inclusive teaching, differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEN. The DfE believes that the majority of students can make progress through such teaching. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good-quality, personalised teaching from their class teacher.”

Our policy has been reviewed and written to reflect the Code of Practice 0-25 guidance.

Aim

We firmly believe that everyone can learn more, if they are taught appropriately, whatever they have previously achieved. At St Mark's CE School, we believe there is no 'ceiling' or upper limit to learning; intelligence is not fixed and we aim to ensure that all children build learning capacity to make progress and exceed their potential whatever their individual need.

The graduated approach to support

The graduated approach is a layered response to intervention which maximises resources and ensures that students receive appropriate support.

As a first step, high quality inclusive teaching for all learners reduces the need for additional levels of support. However, in order for some students to make progress, increased levels of support are required, including more targeted intervention.

For a small number of learners who have not made expected progress; despite the additional actions put in place by the setting through each layer of the graduated approach, may require the Local Authority to carry out an assessment of the learner's needs. This may lead to an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in order to ensure the learner achieves their best outcomes.

Where a student is identified as having SEND, St Mark's CE School will act to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place.

This SEND support will take the form of a **four-part cycle** through which earlier decisions and actions will be **revisited, refined and revised** with a growing understanding of the student's needs and of what supports the student in making **good progress and securing good outcomes**.

This is known as the graduated approach, and is the trigger to move through the layers of support overseen by the school SENCO for the primary/secondary phase of our all through school.

St Mark's Graduated Approach



Note: Students can move up and down this graduated approach subject to review of progress.

Categories of Special Educational Need

SEND practice does not assume that there are neatly defined categories of special educational need, but recognises that children's needs and requirements fall into the following broad areas:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Students' educational need can then be further categorised into specific learning difficulties or needs.

Speech, Language and Communication Need (SLCN): Speech and Language difficulties usually fall into one of three categories: expressive disorders, where children find it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings through speech and/or writing; auditory processing difficulties, where students find it hard to make sense of what they hear, or process what has been said; receptive disorders, where children have problems understanding certain aspects of speech – for example confusing similar words, or misinterpreting instructions.

Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC): Students who are diagnosed with Autism or Asperger's Syndrome will require specific provision to enable them to achieve at school. They often find social situations difficult and communication can be difficult. Some students with ASC find change difficult and can show challenging behaviour when anxious or when situations change. They can take language very literally and often find it difficult to express their emotions and thoughts. ***[We are an Autism in Schools project school]***

Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD): A student may have difficulty in acquiring new concepts or remembering newly acquired skills. They may be unable to participate in tasks requiring them to use imagination or to follow group instructions. They may have a short concentration span and become easily distracted. They may have difficulty following texts which their peers can read, or in mastering basic number concepts.

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD): A student in this category will have an uneven profile of strengths and weaknesses; this may include a diagnosis of dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia. There is usually a disparity between their practical and verbal abilities and their ability to acquire some, or all, literacy or numeracy skills, or have difficulty with co-ordination, handwriting or motor skills.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH): This can include students with a wide range of needs, often including those who are diagnosed with ADHD, ODD or other mental health issues; those who are experiencing emotional issues outside of school, or who, for a range of reasons, are disengaged from education. These students may show challenging behaviour in school, have frequent or prolonged absences, or become withdrawn. They are often at risk of underachieving academically, unless suitable provision is identified and implemented.

Physical Disability (PD): This term covers a very wide range of physical and medical conditions including mobility difficulties. Any students with a physical impairment (this includes physical, mobility and medical conditions) will be monitored by the SENCo and appropriate measures will be put in place to ensure their needs are met. This information will be shared with all staff involved. The provision will be included in a support plan, shared with students and parents/carers and will be reviewed regularly.

Hearing Impairment (HI): Hearing impairment may be recognised in students who are slow to react, and who watch carefully to see what others are doing. They may watch faces intently and become overanxious about understanding the task. They may keep asking to repeat what was said and may either shout or whisper when talking.

Visual Impairment (VI): Visual impairment is a partial or total lack of vision in one or both eyes. Colour blindness is not deemed a visual impairment – although it is useful for the teacher to know if this problem exists. A student with vision problems may have watery, itchy and/or red eyes and keep blinking rapidly. They

may squint or peer at their work or appear clumsy, bumping into things or missing a catch. They may write in large letters, not on the line, or complain of not being able to see the board. They may not like strong light or glare.

Assess – Plan – Do – Review Cycle [The four-part cycle]

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2014), St Mark's CE School uses the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' approach as explained below:

Assess-plan-do-review is a teaching and learning cycle, used on a daily basis to inform effective teaching. As part of a graduated approach to support, it is designed to improve teaching for ALL students.

However, where a potential learning difficulty has been identified, the cycle is used in a more forensic fashion, the process becoming increasingly personalised.

This four-part cycle leads to a growing understanding of the students' barriers and gaps in learning.

By revisiting, refining and revising approaches to meeting the student's needs, the student is enabled to make good progress and achieve good outcomes.



Assess: Once a concern has been raised regarding a student's progress, the class teacher/s or relevant linked staff will carry out a clear analysis of the student's needs with the support of the SENCo.

Plan: As appropriate, the teacher/s or relevant linked staff, in consultation with the SENCo, parent/carer and student should agree the adjustments, support and interventions to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress. Where relevant, interventions will be recorded on the student's SEN support plan. Each student will also have personal targets with specific outcomes to be achieved over a period of time.

Do: The class teacher/s remain responsible for working with the student on a daily basis. Where interventions might involve group or one to one teaching or support away from the class teacher/s, they will still retain responsibility for the student's progress.

Review: Class teacher/s or relevant linked staff, with the support of the SENCo, will arrange to liaise with parents/carers to review their child's progress, including the views of the young person. If the young person has an Education and Healthcare Plan parents/carers will be invited to a review meeting arranged by the SENCo Assistant known as an *annual review*. Parent/carer's views and that of their child, along with recent assessments by any external agencies and internal attainment and progress data with teacher/s commentary

will be discussed to ensure that the plan remains relevant, outcomes are being tracked and small steps for the next 12 months can be agreed.

If at the review stage, it is decided more expert help is required then with parent/carer's consent school will make a referral to the appropriate external agency such as the Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapy service or Specialist Inclusion Partnership and Outreach. After assessment and discussion with the parent/carer and the class teacher/s or relevant linked staff, a programme of support is usually then provided. A copy of any written reports will be sent to the parent/carer, which hopefully will be shared with the school, in some cases parent/carers and the young person are asked for their consent to share reports with the school before it is provided to the school, therefore do check and get in touch to check if we have received such information as it is not necessarily automatic.

Requesting an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) / Statutory My Plan

Where, despite all of our best endeavours, the child still makes little progress in the areas targeted, or requires a significant amount of support over and above the school's notional budget we will discuss with the parents and child the need for us to approach the LA to request a statutory assessment for an EHC plan. (This may or may not result in the LA issuing an EHC plan.) If the LA decide to go ahead with the statutory assessment the Local Authority SEND Lead Worker will co-ordinate the assessment and write a draft EHC Plan in conjunction with the parent/carer, child, external agencies and school to submit to the LA. Where a child has an EHC Plan, the school will carry out an annual review. The parent/carer, child, SEND lead worker, the LA, outside agencies, SENCO and the class teacher/s or relevant linked staff will be invited to attend. The EHC Plan will ensure a collaborative, joined up approach to support the child. Parents/carers of children with a statutory EHC Plan have the right to request a personal budget. If this is requested, the SEND lead worker and the LA will provide support on this.

Local Offer

Southampton LA has compiled a local offer which details all the services and support available for children and young people with SEND. The link for this is: Southampton Local Offer or can be found at www.southampton.gov.uk

Links and use of outside agencies include:

- Local Education Team
- Virtual School
- MHST (Mental Health in Schools Team) NHS
- CAMHS (Child And Adolescent Mental Health Service) [Southampton]
- Educational Psychologist (E.P) [Southampton City Council]
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Visual Impairment (VI) and Hearing Impairment (HI) Teams
- Occupational Therapy
- Specialist Advisory and Outreach Services such as Southampton Inclusion Partnership
<https://www.southamptoninclusion.net/>
- Health teams
- LA personnel
- SENDIAS <https://www.southamptonsendiass.info/>
- Re:Minds <https://www.reminds.org.uk/>
- Autism Hampshire <https://www.autismhampshire.org.uk/>

Partnership with parents/carers/children

Parents/carers are important partners in the effective working relationship with the school in raising their child's attainment. They are invited to be fully involved in the identification, assessment and decision-making process in the school. Parents/carers' contribution to their child's education is valued highly by the staff of the school. Parents/carers are encouraged to involve their child in the decision-making processes, including recording children's views and implementing and reviewing SEN support plans and EHCP's. The school will also update parents/carers with relevant information. We show sensitivity, honesty and mutual respect in encouraging children to share concerns, discuss strategies and see themselves as equal partners in the school. All children are involved in making decisions, where possible, as soon as they start at the school. The ways in which we encourage them to participate reflects their emerging maturity. Confident young children, who know that their opinions will be valued and who can practise making choices, will be more secure and effective children during their school years. In our schools, we encourage children to participate in their learning. We encourage them to have a voice in deciding the priorities for our School Development Plan through the school council. We encourage them to take ownership of their learning targets by discussing their targets and what they can do to improve. For children with SEND this includes discussing the strategies for their success. We encourage them to take part in reviewing their progress and in setting new goals and challenges.

Links with other schools, and agencies including the voluntary sector

Links are maintained to ensure a smooth transfer on school entry through liaison and visits to local Early Years settings and schools where necessary. Children are invited to visit for induction visits in the term before they start school, we liaise with other agencies at this stage if appropriate. Children with SEND who transfer from other settings or schools are supported through their induction to the school by the class teacher/s, SENCo, other support staff and by their peers to ensure that they have a smooth transition. In some cases, the SENCo will arrange an extra transition meeting and visit where appropriate. The SENCo/s attend local cluster meetings and are able to network with staff from other local schools and are regularly updated on local initiatives from the city wide Inclusive Education Audit team <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/send-local-offer/professionals/inclusive-education-audit/>.

Training and Resources

Most of the resources used by children having special educational needs are available within the classroom, this is sometimes referred to as being part of our ordinarily/universally available provision. Money may also be spent on further additional resources, staffing costs and time allocated to the SENCo to manage the support for special educational needs and meet the objectives of this policy. Any requests for further additional resources should be made to the SENCo.

Through the monitoring and evaluating of our provision the SENCo, with the Senior Leadership Team will identify any particular professional development needs of the staff. This will, where appropriate, be linked closely to the School's Improvement Plan and/or performance management objectives. Staff who attend further courses will feedback on courses attended through staff meetings or department/faculty meetings. The effectiveness of such professional development will be monitored and evaluated by the SENCo, and information provided during the annual evaluation of the school's

overall SEN provision. Training is provided for class teachers and TAs by the SENCo and Senior Leaders and outside specialists to ensure all staff are up to date with current thinking and have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. We have committed to the Autism in Schools project and are in the process of implementing actions based on recommendations from our link advisor (for more information see <https://www.local.gov.uk/case-studies/autism-schools>).

Admissions

St Mark's CE School has inclusivity at its heart. Every year we welcome a diverse range of students, including those with SEND, in accordance with the Local Authority (LA) Admissions Policy. Education Act 1996 (Section 316) states if a parent of a child with an Education, Health and Care plan wishes to have their child educated in a mainstream school, the LA must provide a place. This must happen **unless** this placement is incompatible with the efficient education of other children, and there are no reasonable steps that can be taken to prevent the incompatibility. www.southampton.gov.uk

Roles and responsibilities

At St Mark's CE School there is a local Governing Body member who has been assigned as the link member for SEND. The Executive Headteacher will report to the SEND link Governor on the overall progress of students with SEND and be involved in the strategic development of the SEND policy and procedures within our school. The SENCos will provide information for analysis and scrutiny.

The SEND link Governor for St Mark's CE School is Gerry Gibbs.

The Governing Body, working with the Executive Head Teacher and SENCos, need to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements including:

- Being fully involved in developing and monitoring the school's SEND policy.
- Being up to date and knowledgeable about the school's SEND provision, including how funding, equipment and personnel resources are deployed.
- Ensuring that the SEND provision is an integral part of the School Improvement Plan and the school's Self-Evaluation Framework and processes.
- The quality of SEND provision is continually monitored.
- An annual report is provided to parents/carers.
- Ensuring that a child with special educational needs joins in the activities of the school together with children who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision for their learning. The Governing Body must ensure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for the school.

(See p97 of Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 - 25 years).

The school's Governing Body must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support students at school with medical conditions and should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, students and parents/carers to make sure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported.

(See p 44 of Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 - 25 years).

(Governors and school should refer to *Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (2014)*: statutory guidance from the Department for Education.)

In compliance with current legislation and requirements as specified in Schedule 10, relating to Disability, of the Equality Act 2010 the Governing Body must take all steps not to discriminate against

disabled children in their admission arrangements, in the education, exclusion and associated services provided by the school for its young people or in relation to exclusions from the school. School governors must publish three-year plans showing how they will increase access for disabled children to the curriculum, the physical environment of the school, and written information in alternative formats. Please see our Accessibility Policy and Plan on our school website Policies page.

Executive Head Teacher

The Executive Head Teacher is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day management of provision for students with SEND but this is delegated to the SENCo. The Executive Head Teacher should keep the governing body fully informed about the provision and any issues that arise. The Executive Head Teacher should advise the governing body on policies and practice that address barriers to including students with SEND. The Executive Head Teacher should also work closely with the SENCo or SEND team and should ensure that the relationship between the SENCo/Inclusion Team and other staff in the school is mutually supportive.

Every school must appoint a 'responsible person' for SEND. This is usually the Executive Head Teacher, but the chair of governors or a governor appointed by the governing body might take on that responsibility. The 'responsible person' must make sure that all those who are responsible for teaching a student with a SEND are informed about this and where to find supporting information.

Teachers and support staff (may include part-time teachers, Higher Level Teaching Assistants etc.)

Teachers and support staff should be involved, as appropriate, in the development of the school's SEND policy. All staff need to be aware of the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision for student with SEND. Teachers are responsible for devising strategies and identifying appropriate methods for ensuring access to the curriculum. This includes strategies for providing adaptive teaching. Teachers meet regularly with the SENCo or Senior Leaders to examine their strategies and methods to see if they can make improvements that will help students to access the curriculum. All staff in the school or setting who may come into contact with a student who has SEND should be advised of the planned strategies for meeting the student's needs. Teachers will be asked to provide the SENCo with feedback on the student's progress as part of the process reviewing their needs. All class teachers have a responsibility for those students in their classes, with Special Educational Needs. The class teacher or tutor is the contact 'key person' for parents/carers to discuss their child's day to day SEND needs.

Teaching Assistants (including General TAs, Named Student Allowance, etc)

Teaching assistants work under the guidance of the class teacher and with the support of the SENCo and Head of Schools, to support young people, both within the classroom and in intervention groups. The school maintains a strict policy of not having 1:1 TA's unless an EHCP states this explicitly. TAs are assigned to some classes to support the progress of all children, including those with SEN. The named student allowance for some young people with an EHCP is used in accordance for delivering the provisions stated on the plan, as well as staff training, planning time, meetings and additional resources or equipment. The effective use of these funds is measured against the progress towards the outcomes as stated on the EHCP.

SENCO

The SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) Primary/Secondary is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of special educational needs through their respective phase school.

This will involve:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the special educational needs policy.
- Liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEND.

- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Liaising with early year providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.
- Being the key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Working with the head teacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Liaising, in conjunction with class teachers, with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.
- Overseeing the provision for each child and the impact this has on their academic and emotional progress. This is monitored through the child's SEN Support Plan or EHCP.
- Applying for Education, Health and Care plans where appropriate
- Chairing Annual Reviews for pupils with an existing EHCP.
- Overseeing and maintaining specific resources for special educational needs
- Working alongside staff in assessing children's needs and ensuring that children make progress.
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reporting on provision to the Governing Body in conjunction with the designated responsible person.
- Liaising with parents of children with special educational needs, where requests and information cannot be dealt with by the class teacher or tutor.
- Monitoring of expertise and training needs within the school - where a need is identified, the SENCo will find training or support.

Storing and Managing Information

Records are kept online within the school's secure system. Information from feeder settings and schools are sent to St. Mark's CE School as part of the transition process. This information is sent on to receiving schools when pupils leave St Mark's as part of the transition process. In some cases, the SENCo will contact the schools if the need arises.

Dealing with Complaints

If parents/carers are unhappy about provision for their child they should follow the school's complaints policy, located under the school website Policies page.

Criteria for evaluating the success of the policy

The policy will be evaluated against the objectives stated on page two and measured by:

- Teachers' planning reflecting the learning objectives for children with special educational needs.
- Parents being involved when individual targets are set for children by discussing and receiving copies of their child's SEN Support Plan or EHCP according to the level of need.
- Children being involved in discussing, constructing and reviewing their own SEN Support Plan targets or EHCP.
- Child attainment or progress, as measured by objective testing and teachers' professional judgement, being raised and appropriately acted upon.
- Discussions between the SEND governor and SENCo/s to monitor the progress of children.
- The School Development and Improvement Plan priorities which include the provision for SEND.
- Value for money review of our Special Educational Needs funding.
- Any external evaluation, audit or inspection.

Date of review

This policy will be reviewed in Autumn Term 2025 and shared via the website.