



Special Educational Needs Policy

Policy Agreed: Autumn 2026

Review date: Autumn 2027

Head Teacher: Anthony David

Chair of Governors: Rebecca Shilling

We believe that everyone is precious and loved by God. We aspire to let our light shine in all that we do. We nurture and empower one another to flourish. Together we shine in our world by showing compassion and by serving others. Let God's light shine through us.

Context

School SENCo: Lucy Courtney-Diggins

School SEN Governor: Maria Elia

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Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy is based on the statutory framework for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and has been written with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- **Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014**, which sets out the duties of local authorities, schools and other agencies in identifying, assessing and making provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014** (SI 2014/1530), which provide the legal framework for implementing the Children and Families Act 2014.
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (January 2015)**, which is statutory guidance for organisations working with and supporting children and young people with SEND. Schools must have regard to this guidance when carrying out their duties under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- **The Equality Act 2010**, which places a duty on schools to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- **The Education Act 1996** (as amended), which outlines schools' responsibilities in relation to pupils with special educational needs.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (current edition), recognising that children with SEND may face additional safeguarding challenges and require appropriate support and protection.

This policy should be read alongside the school's SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Equality Information and Objectives, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

Introduction

St Mary's Church of England Primary is committed to meeting the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Our expectation is that children and young people with SEND will receive an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

- achieve their best
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

We will use our best endeavors to make sure that a pupil with SEND gets the support they need – this means doing everything we can to meet the pupil's special educational needs.

Aims and Objectives

Our following school vision permeates our policy for our approach to special educational needs at St Mary's:

We believe that everyone is precious and loved by God.

We aspire to let our light shine in all that we do.

We nurture and empower one another to flourish.

Together we shine in our world by showing compassion and by serving others.

Let God's light shine through us.

At the heart of what we do, is promote a strengths-based dialogue with learners, this enables us to celebrate the unique and wonderfully diverse nature of every learner, whilst identifying and supporting the development of areas of need.

We have a culture of provision to enable access and participation for all learners. This provision includes **adaptations, resources and support** that an adult makes to their delivery to promote participation. Support can include access to physical resources such as pencil grips, laptops, fidget toys, electronic tablets, sensory cushions, voice recorders etc., as well as support from adults or other learners when additional time is made available.

This policy accepts the definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN) as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice. It reflects the new approach to and arrangements for SEN outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Governing Body and teaching staff will do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Where the Headteacher or the appropriate governor has been informed that a child has SEN, those needs will be made known to all who are likely to teach them.

All staff and governors in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for children who have SEN.

The Headteacher, staff and governors will draw up and report annually to parents on the policy and effectiveness of the school's work for pupils with SEN. This will be published on the school website.

All staff will ensure children with SEN can join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have SEN, so far as that is reasonably practical and compatible with the pupil receiving the necessary special educational provision, the efficient education of other children in the school and the efficient use of resources

Responsible Person

The 'responsible person' for SEND is the Assistant Head (part of the Senior Leadership Team), Lucy Courtney-Diggins. The responsible person also coordinates the provision of education for pupils with SEND.

Admission and Inclusion

All the teachers in the school are teachers of children with Special Educational Needs. As such St Mary's C of E Primary adopts a 'whole school approach' to SEN that involves all staff adhering to a model of good practice based on a Quality First Teaching model.

The staff of the school are committed to identifying and providing for the needs of all children in a wholly inclusive environment. Inclusion is given a high priority in this policy, in line with the policies of Islington Local Authority. All children with SEN are afforded the same rights as other children in terms of their admission to school.

Specialist Provision

St Mary's C of E Primary St Mary's is a one level site with one playground, separated into a large and small area that are both at the same level and step free. Our school building is a one storey block. All classrooms are arranged on the ground floor. There a disabled toilet for adult use. The seven classroom, school offices, staffroom, hall, courtyard, and small teaching rooms are all on the ground floor. The school has lift access, including one door entrance with step free access via the side of the building.

The school will consider purchasing equipment if there is an agreed identified need. We will consider this at the pupil's termly or annual review. We have worked with partners to purchase specialist equipment tailored for individuals, including:

- Personal laptops / ipads
- Move and sit cushion
- Audio books for group readers
- Specialist hand writing equipment
- Devices for additional recording e.g. cameras, video recorders, voice recorders
- Specialised cutlery and scissors
- Sensory equipment: hammock, trampoline

Access to the Curriculum

The Curriculum is the entitlement for all children. It will be made available for all pupils, including those with predictable SEN. Where pupils have SEN, a graduated response will be adopted. The school will, in other than exceptional cases, make full use of classroom and school resources before drawing on external support, as outlined in the [Islington Local Offer](#).

The school will make provision for pupils with SEN to match the nature of their individual needs and the class teacher and SENCo will keep regular records of the pupils' SEN, the action taken and the outcomes.

There will be flexible grouping of pupils so that learning needs may be met in individual, small grouping or whole class contexts.

The curriculum will be differentiated and adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teaching styles and flexible groups will reflect this approach. Schemes of work for pupils, within classes and year groups, will reflect whole school approaches to teaching and learning and will take account of SEN. Curriculum tasks and activities may be broken down into a series of small and achievable steps for pupils who have marked learning difficulties.

Providing the graduated response: SEN Support

The school offers a differentiated curriculum. When a pupil does not make progress and shows signs of significant difficulty in some of the following areas: acquiring literacy and numeracy; presenting persistent behaviour, emotional and social difficulties; has sensory or physical problems; or communication or interaction difficulties, the school follows the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' approach.

There are five key features of a person-centred approach at St Mary's;

1. the child is at the centre (deeply rooted in the principles of shared power and self-determination)

2. the family members and friends are partners in planning (to view the person in the context of their family and community)
3. reflect what is important to the person, their capacities and what support they require. It identifies capacities rather than simply listing difficulties
4. perceived relevance – any plan should result in actions that are about the child's life and not simply a list of services that may or may not be available
5. the plan is the start of the process of listening, learning and future actions, as opposed to simply being a one-off event.

Embracing this approach is a key principle and is at the heart of the culture at our school, as a result, the impact of pupils with SEND is that barriers are reduced and removed and they are increasingly able to access whole-class learning more independently.

Assessments to explore a child's emerging needs will allow the child to show what they know, understand and can do, as well as to identify any learning difficulties. Following assessment, we will put a plan in place detailing either appropriate class adjustments, resource support, or interventions, such as:

- Alternative teaching strategies
- Classroom organisation and management
- Use of specialist equipment
- In-class support by teacher or teaching assistant
- Small group work
- Managed specialist interventions
- Behaviour modification programmes

Sharing a language of assessment that is additional to and different from the curriculum assessment helps to inform the identification of provision that is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum.

The plans will be outcome focused. Parents will be updated on their child's progress. Decisions on the most appropriate type of action are applied individually, by considering attainment, nature of difficulty, strengths and achievements and whether current strategies should be changed or amended.

Parents are always consulted before their child is placed on the SEN register.

Children on the SEN register have adjustments, resources and interventions deployed to help the child achieve agreed outcomes. These will be captured in a Provision Map, or a Learning Support Plan - Pupil Passport or an Individual Support Plan. Parents and children will be involved in developing the plan. The plan will also set out review arrangements.

Where there are complex needs and more than one agency is involved, the school, in discussion with parents and other agencies may initiate an early help assessment to assist planning and support.

Identification of SEND need and SEND support

At St. Mary's C.E. Primary School, we believe that early identification is fundamental to ensuring that every child receives the right support at the right time. We are committed to identifying emerging needs as early as possible through a graduated, evidence-informed approach that places the child and family at the centre of decision-making.

Identification of SEND is viewed as a whole-school responsibility. Every teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all pupils in their class, including those who may have SEND. Teachers are supported by the Leader of Inclusion (SENCO) to identify, assess and respond to emerging needs promptly and effectively. We recognise that children should not have to fail before support is provided, and that a formal diagnosis is not required for appropriate provision to begin.

Children are identified through a range of evidence rather than relying on a single assessment or diagnosis. Information is gathered from multiple sources to build a holistic understanding of each child's strengths, barriers to learning and individual needs.

Our approach to early identification includes:

- Knowing every child well through positive relationships, careful observation and daily formative assessment.
- Delivering high-quality adaptive teaching and monitoring pupils' progress closely to identify where additional support may be required.
- Regular assessment and progress reviews, including attainment, progress, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and engagement.
- Listening carefully to the views of parents and carers, recognising that they know their child best and are essential partners in the identification process.
- Listening to the voice of the child to understand their experiences, aspirations and any barriers they may be facing.
- Gathering detailed transition information from nurseries, previous schools and external agencies to ensure support begins as early as possible.
- Sharing information effectively between teachers and the Leader of Inclusion during transition between year groups to ensure continuity of provision.
- Using professional observations from teachers, support staff and the SENCO to identify patterns relating to learning, communication, interaction, emotional wellbeing, sensory processing, physical development and independence.

- Using targeted school-based assessments and screening tools, where appropriate, to explore barriers to learning and inform next steps.
- Working collaboratively with external professionals, including Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, CAMHS, Health Services, Social Care and Local Authority support services, where additional advice is required.

When concerns are identified, St. Mary's follows the graduated approach described within the SEND Code of Practice (2015). This ensures that support is implemented early, reviewed regularly and adapted according to the child's changing needs.

The Graduated Approach: Assess – Plan – Do – Review

The Graduated Approach is a cyclical process that enables provision to be carefully planned, implemented, evaluated and refined. At St. Mary's, this approach ensures that support is responsive, evidence-informed and focused on achieving the very best outcomes for every child.

Assess

The class teacher, working alongside the Leader of Inclusion (SENCO), gathers information from a range of sources to develop a comprehensive understanding of the child's strengths and needs. This includes classroom observations, assessment information, progress data, attendance, behaviour, discussions with parents and the child's own views. Where appropriate, advice from external professionals is sought to further inform assessment. We consider what the child can do well, the barriers they may be experiencing and the support that will enable them to make progress.

Plan

Following assessment, the class teacher, SENCO, parents and, where appropriate, the child agree clear outcomes and the provision required to achieve them. Reasonable adjustments, adaptive teaching strategies, targeted interventions and any specialist support are planned collaboratively. Responsibilities are clearly identified, success criteria are agreed and review dates are established.

Do

The agreed provision is implemented by the class teacher, who remains responsible and accountable for the child's progress, even where interventions are delivered by teaching assistants or specialist staff. The SENCO provides guidance, coaching and support to ensure provision is delivered consistently and effectively. High-quality teaching remains the foundation of support for every pupil.

Review

Provision is reviewed regularly to evaluate its impact on the child's progress, participation and wellbeing. Teachers, parents, the child and the SENCO work together to consider what has been successful, whether outcomes have been achieved and what further support may be required. The information gathered during the review informs the next cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review, ensuring that provision continually evolves to meet the child's needs.

This graduated approach is embedded across the school and enables St. Mary's to identify needs early, respond promptly and provide increasingly personalised support where required. Through ongoing collaboration with families, staff and external professionals, we ensure that every child is supported to achieve their potential, participate fully in school life and truly let their light shine.

Resources

The school is allocated a notional SEN budget (a combination of funding streams specifically to support SEND children and a proportion of other income is assumed to be used to support SEND pupils). In addition, additional funding is sometimes awarded to support pupils with higher needs.

The principles which guide the governing body in allocating resources are SENCo recommendation, Teacher Assessments and Pupil Progress Meetings.

Parent Participation

The school will actively seek the involvement of parents in the education of their children. It is recognised that it is particularly important with pupils who have SEN where the support and encouragement of parents is often the crucial factor in achieving success.

Parents will be kept informed about the special educational needs experienced by their children in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Code of Practice. Communications between the parent and the school will be consistently maintained. We will discuss with parents when we seek support from an external agency.

The school will work to ensure that children are fully aware of their own needs and the targets in their Plans. We will encourage all children to be independent learners and to work towards a positive progression to adulthood from the earliest stage.

Multi-agency working

Regular liaison is maintained with the following external agencies:

- Outreach Support Services: The Bridge, Samuel Rhodes, Richard Cloudesley, New River College, School Wellbeing Service
- Educational Psychologist
- Child Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Pupil Services
- Health Service (school nurse, dietician, therapists)
- Bright Start and Bright Futures

Early Help

Most of the time families cope well with the demands of family life, but when circumstances change, or their usual networks of support let them down, there is help available. Islington is committed to making sure that families get support when they need it, quickly and with the minimum of fuss. This is referred to as Early Help and is available to families with children aged 0-19, to 'nip problems in the bud' before they become more serious.

Lots of families won't need a formal service and will get the help they need through advice or information, for example through The Family Information Service or their local Bright Start children's centre or local Bright Start community venue. These services are referred to as 'universal' meaning they are open to everyone.

When additional support is needed, for example with physical or mental ill health parenting or practical challenges like debt, rent arrears and unemployment, Early Help Services can step in. This support is delivered by a lead professional, usually a Family Support Worker, and is tailored to individual families with an emphasis on building skills and resilience to manage and solve problems.

Early Help thinks about the needs of the whole family and coordinates this support so there is one lead person bringing together other services as a team around the family. This means the family don't have to keep repeating their story and there is better communication between professionals.

• **Bright Start for 0-5 year olds**

Support for families from pregnancy until your child is five.

Family Support Surgeries, Monday-Friday between 9am-12noon: if you have a question, need some information, advice or guidance our family engagement workers are still here to talk over the phone. If lines are busy, leave a message we will get back to you when we can.

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9am-12noon
- Tel: 020 7527 8376

If you are not sure which Bright Start area you are in, please contact Islington Family Information Service: 020 75275959; fis@islington.gov.uk

We are encouraging all parents to sign up to our fortnightly Bright Start, Bright Ideas **newsletter and Quick Tips**

- **Bright Futures, Early Help for 5-19 year olds**

Family Support, primary and secondary school age: **020 7527 4343**.

If you think a child may be at risk of neglect or abuse call the Children's Services Contact Team (CSCT) on 020 7527 7400 who will make sure the family are referred to the right service including Children's Social Care teams.

Arrangements for the Treatment of Complaints:

If you have a complaint about SEN provision, which we have been unable to resolve to your satisfaction, please inform us promptly by contacting the following people in this order;

- Class Teacher
- SENCo - Lucy Courtney-Diggins - using the email school@stmarys.islington.sch.uk
- Head teacher – using the email school@stmarys.islington.sch.uk
- SEN Governor or Chair of Governors (a letter can be submitted through school office FAO SEN Governor). The SEN governor will then refer to the complaints procedure to try and address the issue.

Further information about our complaints procedure can be found on the school website.

Workforce Development

In-service training needs related to special educational needs will be identified by the Headteacher in consultation with the staff and will be incorporated into the school development plan.

Evaluating Success

This policy will be kept under review. The governors will gauge the success of the policy by the achievements of the outcomes outlined in individual plans. In addition, evidence will be gathered regarding:

- Staff awareness of individual need
- Success of early help intervention
- Academic progress of pupils with SEN
- Improved behaviour of the children, where this is appropriate
- Pupil attendance
- Consultation with parents
- Children's awareness of their targets and achievements

Relationship to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies on teaching and learning, the school curriculum, equality and assessment, recording and reporting. The Accessibility Plan and School Information Report on the school website are integral to this policy.