

# **St Thomas More Catholic Primary School**

## **Special Educational Needs**

### **and Disabilities Policy**

#### **Introduction**

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve their best. The achievement, attitude and well-being of every child matters and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone within our school. . A strong Catholic ethos and sharing of faith underpins all teaching and learning that takes place, ensuring that all children are treated with equality, fairness and respect.

Every teacher is a teacher of every pupil, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We respect the unique contribution which every individual can make to our school community.

This document is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for provision for children with SEND at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

This policy provides a framework for the identification of and provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It has been written for the benefit of the whole school community to ensure that all are aware of the principles underlying identification and provision and are confidently committed to the agreed strategies.

#### **Compliance**

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years. It has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SENDDD Code of Practice September 2014
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions April 2014
- The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 Framework document September 2013
- Teachers' Standards 2012
- Children and Families Act 2014

This policy has been created in consultation with governors, staff and pupils St Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator, known as SENDCO is Mrs J Austin.

**Definitions of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and Disability (SEND) taken from section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014:**

A child or young person is identified as having SEND 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:

- Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others 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 others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

A child under compulsory school age has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

All schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in accordance with current Disability Legislation. Children with social, emotional and mental health needs, looked after children, poor attendees or those with medical needs, for example, will not necessarily be considered as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities . There may be a range of considerations that impact on progress and attainment but these, in isolation, are not SEND issues.

**Aims**

In keeping with the Catholic ethos at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we welcome children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as part of our community and we aim to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to engage in the curriculum.

We recognise that some children will need additional support to ensure access to the whole curriculum. We will ensure that the needs of the children are identified and assessed and we aim to provide appropriate support strategies alongside a curriculum planned to meet their needs. Additional support and advice from specialist external agencies will be sought where necessary.

We appreciate and encourage the vital role of parents/carers in the identification, assessment and response to their children's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We will work in true partnership with parents/carers, valuing their views and contributions and keeping them fully informed of their child's education.

We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers. We do so by:

- working effectively with all other agencies supporting children and their parents
- giving parents and carers opportunities to play an active and valued role in their child's education
- making parents and carers feel welcome
- encouraging parents and carers to inform school of any difficulties they perceive their child may be having or other needs the child may have which need addressing
- focusing on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need
- allowing parents and carers opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the school can help their child
- agreeing targets for the child
- keeping parents and carers informed and giving support during assessment and any related decision-making process about SEND provision

We believe in the involvement of the child and the importance of taking their views into account. We recognise that all pupils have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice (SEND Code of Practice). All pupils are involved in monitoring and reviewing their progress. We endeavour to fully involve all pupils by encouraging them to:

- state their views about their education and learning
- share in individual target setting across the curriculum
- self-review their progress and set new targets

We are committed to effective collaboration between all agencies working with a child and to a multi-disciplinary approach towards meeting children's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. We will actively support the establishment and maintenance of close links with all agencies working with the child.

## **Objectives**

1. To identify and provide for pupils who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
2. To work within the guidance provide in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014
3. To operate a “whole pupil, whole school” approach to the management and provision of support for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
4. To provide a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-coordinator (SENDCO) who will work with the SEND Inclusion Policy
5. To provide support and advice for all staff working with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and disability pupils

## **Named Persons**

The named persons responsible for co-ordinating the day-to-day provision of education for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School is Mrs J Austin.

## **Staffing**

0.7 SENDCO time is spent directly on diagnostic problems, multi-agency liaison and other special needs queries that arise during the week.

The majority of our LSAs support our SEND children and work on PPF targets within the classroom setting during the morning sessions. In addition we employ 4 LSAs to utilise the afternoon sessions on the provision of social communication, reading, occupational therapy and speech & language related programmes.

These members of staff dedicate all/some of their time to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision:

Mrs J Austin (SENDCO), Mrs Anderton, Mrs Lockyer, Mrs Heasman, Mrs Edwards, Mrs Byrne, Mrs Hammond, Mrs Cole, Mrs Fletcher, Mrs Harding, Mrs John, Mrs Stevens, Mrs Robertson, Mrs Farrant, Mrs Gentry, Mrs Townsend, Mrs Barker, Mr Bickmore, Mrs Kinnon and Mrs Brown

### **The role of the Governing body**

The Governor responsible for the oversight of St. Thomas More Primary School's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities provision is Mrs Flood.

The Governing body has due regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEND. The Governing body, in cooperation with the Headteacher, determines the school's general policy and approach to the provision for children with SEND. They also establish the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintain a general oversight of the school's work.

### **Coordination of Provision**

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator is responsible for:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- Coordinating the provision for the children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- Managing learning support assistants
- Overseeing the records of all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Liaising with the parents/carers of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Contributing to the in-service training of all staff
- Liaising with external agencies including the LEA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services and voluntary bodies.
- Reporting to the Governing body

### **Admission Arrangements**

Admission arrangements follow Medway Council criteria. St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is an inclusive mainstream school. Generally it is not expected that there will be any different admission arrangements for children with SEND. For further details, please refer to the school's Admission's Policy.

## **Educational Inclusion**

In our school, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We take into account 'Every Child Matters', the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and Race Equality. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- Provide different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations
- Require different strategies for learning
- Acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates
- Need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences

Teachers respond to children's needs by:

- Providing support for children who need help with communication, language and literacy
- Planning to develop children's understanding through the use of all available senses and experiences
- Planning for children's full participation in learning, and in physical and practical activities
- Helping children to manage their behaviour and to take part in learning safely and effectively
- Helping individuals to manage their emotions, particularly trauma and stress, and to take part in learning

## **Individual Healthcare Plans**

When a child has a special educational need, the individual healthcare plan should be linked to the child's statement or EHC plan where they have one. Please refer to the school's Medical Policy.

## **Identification, Assessment and Provision**

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we provide a graduated approach to support. Quality First Teaching is an entitlement for every child. The Code of Practice emphasises the need to identify pupils at the earliest possible time (COP, p46, paragraph 5:11)

Before a child comes to school, we ask parents to fill in a pre-admission form. This is the first opportunity parents have to tell us of any problems that may concern them. If we felt that it was necessary we would arrange a meeting prior to the child coming to school either with the parents and/or the pre-school providers.

We have an early years screening programme for every child during the first term in the reception class, according to the Foundation Stage Profile. This helps us to identify problems at the earliest possible opportunity and gives us a baseline to enable us to monitor their progress. Children are then reassessed at the end of the Autumn, Spring and Summer terms.

Children are assessed at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School both informally, through teacher and LSA general assessment, and also through formal assessment by the SEND team, under the guidance of the SENDCO. Children who are not meeting age related expectations, will be monitored by teachers and supported with Quality First Teaching and appropriate differentiation. Assessment for learning, attention to learning styles, preparatory and over-teaching will resolve many issues for learners. High quality teaching differentiated for individuals is the first step in responding to pupils who may have SEND. The school regularly and systematically reviews the teaching for all pupils.

Class teachers will make provision that is additional to and different from that provided as part of the usual differentiated curriculum offer, to enable pupils who are not working at age related expectations to learn more effectively. Whatever the level of difficulty the key test of how far the learning needs are being met is whether the child is making expected progress.

Expected progress can be defined in a number of ways:

- Closes the gap between the child and peers
- Prevents the attainment gap from growing wider
- Is similar to that of peers starting from the same baseline but less than that of the majority of peers
- Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress
- Demonstrates an improvement in self-help, social or personal skills
- Demonstrates improvements in the child's attitude and behaviour for learning

Throughout the school the children will be formally assessed. Once a teacher has expressed a concern about a pupil they will discuss the child with the SENDCO. Forms collating evidence of concern in all curriculum and social aspects of schooling will be completed by the class teacher and parents/carers. During this period before identification takes place, identifying pupils about whom we have a concern will be

recorded on our ***Record of Concern (ROC)***. This information will act as a pre-register identification and will be reviewed regularly by the class teacher.

Pupils will then receive intervention to address the area of concern. The triggers for intervention could be the teacher's or others' concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities:

- makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified areas of weakness
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not modified by the positive behaviour management techniques usually employed in the school
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

If a child continues to have difficulties, in spite of adjustments made to the curriculum via differentiation and intervention, then the SEND team will become more involved. The child may undergo further assessment to identify specific areas of difficulty and a PPF (Pupil Provision Form) will be written for the child detailing provision implemented for helping the child. Learning Support Assistant time will be allocated to support those targets within school through a combination of in-class support, group work and/or withdrawal sessions. Targets will be set, reviewed and adjusted termly by the class teacher. This will be closely monitored and recorded on year group provision maps.

If the class teacher and the SENDCOs feel that a child is not making adequate progress, despite the measures in place, then more specialist input may be required. Outside agencies might be called upon to assist us in meeting the child's needs. At this stage children may also be given a School Based Support Plan, in line with local authority guidance.

Each term an 'In School Review' is held which allows us teachers and non-school based professionals to consult together about children who are causing concern. Suggestions and decisions will be made as to how to proceed with the child's future support and whether referrals need to be made to specialist agencies. Parents are consulted before their child is discussed at the In School Review and their permission gained and parents will be then be informed, via the class teacher, of any outcomes. We would also use the review to discuss any children for whom we wish to apply for a referral for an ***Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)***.

### **Referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

If a child has lifelong or significant difficulties they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process which is usually requested by the school but can be requested by a parent. This will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the child are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning provision and identifying resources, is required.

The decision to make a referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan can be taken at an 'In School Review'.

The application for an Education, Health and Care Plans will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents
- Teachers
- SENDCO
- Social Care
- Health professionals

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made by the Local Authority Medway County Council, using advice and evidence sought from education, health and social care about whether or the child is eligible for an EHC Plan. Parents have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

The SEND officer assigned to our school is currently Amy Warner and she is our point of contact with the local authority.

Following Statutory Assessment, if successful, an EHC Plan will be provided by Medway County Council, if it is decided that the child's needs are not being met by the support that is ordinarily available. The school and the child's parents will be involved developing and producing the plan.

Parents have the right to appeal against the content of the EHC Plan. They may also appeal against the school named in the Plan if it differs from their preferred choice.

Once the EHC Plan has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the pupil's formal record and reviewed at least annually by external agencies, staff, parents and the pupil. The Person Centred Annual Review enables provision for the

pupil to be evaluated and, where appropriate, for changes to be put in place, for example, reducing or increasing levels of support.

Further information about EHC Plans can be found via the Medway Council website

<http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/service.page?id=Oqj46Nsz6gg>

**Or by contacting the Medway SEND team by email at [SENDEducationteam@medway.gov.uk](mailto:SENDEducationteam@medway.gov.uk) or telephone 01634 33 11 23**

### **Facilities and SEND Training**

The school's SEND department is based in the Year 6 block in the school and is equipped with resources and guidance for supporting children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The majority of the school is housed in one storey buildings with either ground level or ramped access. The exceptions to this are the learning centre and one toilet block.

We strive to ensure that our SEND team have current knowledge in methods for supporting all of our special needs children. The SENDCO attends regular Local Authority briefings and training sessions to keep up to date with local and national developments

Our Learning Support Assistants also regularly attend courses and feed back relevant information to the rest of the team. LSAs have the opportunity to meet weekly with the SENDCO to discuss any problems that may have arisen during the previous week, share information and receive information from the SENDCO. Regular INSET is provided by the SENDCO on target setting and monitoring PPF delivery, record keeping and target setting/reviews. Individual feedback and suggestions for development are given to LSAs via SEND file monitoring, LSA observations and appraisals.

Key Learning Support Assistants have specialised in the areas of speech, language and communication, SpLD and social communication in order to deliver more specialised programmes. Current individual and group programmes include Reading Reflex, BEAM, Fizzy, Occupational Therapy, Early Literacy Support, Beat Dyslexia, Alpha to Omega, Play and Learning to Socialise (PALs), the Social Use of Language Programme (SULP) and Sensory Circuits.

We also have access to specialised support including Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy programs devised by the Children's Therapy Team.

To support pupils' Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, we have access to play therapists and dog therapy. We also run an emotional literacy support group.

The Head Teacher, SENDCO and outreach support advisors provide school-based INSET for class teachers during staff meetings and/or staff development days. Newly Qualified teachers and newly appointed staff meet with the SENDCO during the first term of their appointment to be introduced to the school's SEND procedures as part of their induction programme. In addition, the SENDCO will meet with class teachers individually to introduce and discuss new support packages for individual children. Where necessary, the SENDCO will arrange for the teacher to meet personally with specialist agencies, such as the Educational Psychology Service to exchange information and provide individual training.

### **Resources**

Appropriate resources are allocated to help with provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and disabilities, including the provision of support staff. The SENDCO is informed by the School Improvement Plan and Special Needs Action Plan when making budgetary choices.

### **Curriculum Access and Social Integration**

Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School are regarded as full members of the school community and we strive to make our provision fully inclusive. Children have full access to the environment, curriculum, resources, staffing, activities and peer group integration. Where access to any of the above areas poses difficulties to our children, additional strategies will be implemented. Extra LSA or specialist agency support is available to enable access and careful choice of resources will be made to facilitate inclusion. The curriculum is planned to meet the known needs of all children and can be further modified, on a short term planning basis, to meet the specific needs of individual children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

### **Evaluating Success**

The SEND Department is constantly reviewing the progress of the children on the SEND register. Targets are set regularly and the children's progress is closely monitored. Detailed records are kept on every child at every stage and parents are given the opportunity to discuss the children's progress on a regular basis. Teachers

keep SEND staff informed on how the children are progressing within the classroom setting.

SEND provision and interventions are recorded on class provision maps, which are reviewed and monitored and updated termly using the assess, plan, do and review cycle. These are updated by the class teacher and are monitored by the SENDCO. They reflect information passed on by the SENDCO at the beginning of an academic year and are adapted following assessments. The interventions are monitored and evaluated termly by the SENDCO and information is fed back to the staff, parents and governors. This helps to identify whether provision is effective in moving children learning on and also a tool to monitor value for money.

Pupils are removed from the SEND register when considered appropriate with the agreement of class teachers and SENDCO.

The success of the implementation of the school's SEND Policy will be reported to the parents through the governing body.

### **External Support Agencies**

St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School maintains a good working relationship with a wide variety of outside agencies. Parents are always informed when the school consults an external agency that becomes involved with their child. Support for children is sought from:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Communication Team (Speech and Language Therapy)
- School Nurse
- Consultant Paediatricians
- Physiotherapists / Occupational Therapy Department
- Pre-school Advisory Service
- Marlborough Autistic Outreach Service
- Bradfields complex needs Outreach service
- Danecourt high needs specialist teaching service
- Other agencies and voluntary organisations as appropriate
- CAMHs Children and Adolescent Mental Health service

### **Links with Parents**

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School believes that a close working relationship with parents is vital in order to ensure

- a) Early and accurate identification and assessment of SEND leading to appropriate intervention and provision
- b) Continuing social and academic progress of children with SEND
- c) Personal and academic targets are set and met effectively

Before their children start school, parents are informed of the work of the SEND department. Once the child is on roll, the SENDCO will talk to parents/carers if their child is experiencing difficulties of any kind. Parents are encouraged to be full partners in their child's education and great emphasis is placed on parental support.

Formal appointments can be arranged with the SENDCO, as well as class teachers, as part of parent consultation evenings.

We aim to have an 'open door' policy and try to see parents as soon as we can, in order to alleviate any problems quickly. Concerns about SEND provision should be addressed initially to the SENDCO who will respond by meeting with parent/carers to discuss the situation.

St Thomas More's SEND Information Report is available on the school website.

### **Primary / Secondary Links**

The records of all children transferring from St. Thomas More to either another primary school or into secondary education will be sent on to promptly to the new school. These records will include any SEND records and details of support packages in place. Where necessary, meetings between the SENDCOs' of both schools can be arranged.

In the case of secondary transfer, in the Summer term, letters are sent to all of the schools allocating places to our SEND children, detailing their SEND levels and arranging meetings with the SENDCO to transfer information. In certain circumstances, arrangements are made for SEND pupils to visit the new school with their LSA to lessen anxieties and aid a smooth transfer.

### **Use of photographs and mobile phones**

Staff, students and volunteers are prohibited from using their mobile phones during any teaching session.

Staff, students and volunteers will never use their camera phones to take photographs of children in the school.

Parents are asked not to use their mobile phones in the classroom.

All photographs taken for assessment purposes will be done so on school owned cameras and will remain the property of school. Permission should be received from all Parents/Guardians regarding the taking and publishing of pictures.

**Reviewing the policy**

This policy will be due for review in May 2019 in line with the Code of Practice. It will be reviewed with an evaluation of the effectiveness of:

- Systems for identifying and assessing children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- The provision made to meet children’s Special Educational Needs and Disabilities , including a review of whole school training needs
- The record-keeping for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- The allocation of resources for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Jennifer Austin  
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator

Updated: May 2018

Review date: May 2019

Authorised by: .....

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