

St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School



Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

Written/Revision Date: 7 November 2024

Next Review: 6 November 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Chris Hopkins', written over a horizontal line.

Approved:
Chris Hopkins, Chair of Governors

Date: 7 November 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a Roman Catholic community, placing God at the centre of our lives. Christian values permeate every aspect of the school day. As a small friendly school, we aim to produce the warmth and intimacy of the family. We recognise each individual as special and loved by God, caring for one another and fostering love, trust and respect. When mistakes are made we recognise them as opportunities for learning and consequent reconciliation.

We aim to help all children fulfil their potential. We have high expectations of the children; we want them to do their best socially, personally, academically and spiritually.

We recognise each child's full entitlement to education. We value children's uniqueness and endeavour to nurture their potential. We strive to promote in them a sense of personal worth and self-confidence, as well as an awareness of their responsibilities to self and others.

1. DIOCESAN MISSION STATEMENT ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

“I have come that you may have life and live it to the full”

John 10:10

Catholic education in the diocese of Southwark must recognise the uniqueness of every individual and the contribution that each individual brings to our school communities.

Catholic children should have access to a curriculum which meets their needs and fulfils statutory requirements.

We acknowledge that some of our children have special educational needs that require extra support and resources. This should not affect their entitlement to education in a Catholic school.

“The Catholic school should be a living embodiment of an ideal and a faith; it should demonstrate a way of life; it should be a witness to society. It should practise what it preaches about the dignity and worth of the individual.”

Cardinal Basil Hume, ‘Our Catholic Schools’

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act (2014);
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015);
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014);
- the Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations (2014);
- Section 137 of the Children and Families Act (2014);
- the Equality Act (2010).

This policy should also be read in conjunction with other school policies such as School Behaviour, Assessment, Equal Opportunities, Supporting Children with Medical Needs, Safeguarding and Child Protection, and the Accessibility Plan.

2. DEFINITION

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015) states that a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) 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.

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this. This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014. We use our best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it.

Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

The school ensures that identification and action taken to meet the needs of children with SEN is available regardless of their ethnicity, home language, gender, disability or social circumstances.

4. INTEGRATION (INCLUSION)

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they:

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

The governing board will ensure that children with SEN will have access to all activities in school by:

- once a term, receiving the Headteacher's report regarding SEN provision;
- monitoring of provision through the Curriculum Committee;
- ensuring the SEN budget is spent as delegated.

The school ethos and its Mission Statement truly reflect the commitment of staff to ensure inclusion of all pupils is a high priority.

5. ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

An application for admission from a pupil with SEN will be considered according to the school's Admissions Policy. The prospective pupil seeking admission will not be disadvantaged because of their SEN.

On making a request for admission, parents are encouraged to discuss their child's possible SEN with the Headteacher at the earliest possible opportunity so that advice, support and possibly training can meet the SEN of their children.

If a pupil has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the governing board will be consulted to consider whether the school can meet the SEN of that child.

6. SPECIAL FACILITIES

The school building has two storeys. There is currently no wheelchair access to the upper floor. There are some restrictions for wheelchair access on the ground floor. The school has an Accessibility Plan.

7. OBJECTIVES

Staff and the governing board will endeavour to:

- identify and assess a child's SEN as early as possible;
- enable each child to have access to the whole curriculum;
- plan for differentiation by matching work to the child's ability, building self esteem;
- ensure that a positive partnership between child, parents and teachers is established so that opinions and information can be exchanged freely;
- give a continuity of provision throughout the school;
- liaise effectively with support services;
- provide a planned programme of staff training;
- maintain a constant approach to record keeping to inform assessment, practice and review.

Day-to-day responsibility for meeting the individual needs of a child lies with the Class Teacher.

The full governing board has responsibility for:

- trying to ensure that the right provision is made for pupils with SEN;
- having been informed by the Local Authority (LA) that a pupil has SEN, making sure that the pupil's Class Teacher is aware of these needs;
- making sure that all teachers in the school know the importance of identifying and providing for pupils with SEN;
- consulting other governing bodies, the LA, and the funding agency for schools when necessary to coordinate provision for pupils with SEN;
- ensuring that the pupil joins in with all the activities of the school as far as possible, taking into account the child's own needs, the efficient education of other children in the school, and the efficient use of resources.

The Headteacher has responsibility for:

- informing the SEN Coordinator (SENCO) and/or Class Teacher of any developments regarding the health and general well-being of a child with SEN which may have come straight to their notice from a parent or outside agency;
- planning INSET needs in consultation with the SENCO and Deputy Headteacher;
- allocation of budget and spending;
- termly review of pupil progress, with SENCO and Senior Leadership Team (SLT);
- provision mapping and timetabling, in consultation with the SENCO and SLT to ensure provision matches needs;
- reporting regularly to the governors on SEN within the school;
- liaison with social services and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO);
- ensuring that staff are given appropriate time to liaise with the SENCO and outside agencies;

- arranging annual reviews for children with SEN Statements.

8. SENCO

The school's SENCO is Wendy Burns, who has been a qualified teacher since 1990. She is a member of the school's SLT. She works three days a week and can be contacted via the school email or telephone. Anna Brown and Celine Carter-Smith are the named governors for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

9. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COORDINATING PROVISION

The SENCO will ensure provision is coordinated by:

- using assessment data to identify group and individual academic needs;
- using assessment and other data to identify individual holistic needs (behaviour, social and emotional);
- organising multi-professional meetings with outside specialists to coordinate high quality support;
- delivering staff training to cascade knowledge and expertise on a range of SEN issues and conditions;
- discussing teaching strategies and methods with staff;
- setting up, monitoring and reviewing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and support plans;
- ensuring SEN data and individual records are kept and updated termly;
- supporting individual or small groups of children;
- purchasing and allocating resources;
- maintaining a resource bank and advising teachers on what might be useful;
- liaising with school staff and parents to ensure consistent approaches (forming good communication links);
- writing and reviewing action plans and contributing to the School Development Plan;
- contributing to the Headteacher's Report to Governors on the success of the SEND Policy.

10. IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

One or more of the following may identify a child's SEN:

- the parents;
- the Class Teacher;
- the Support Teacher;
- information records from feeder schools;
- pre-school medical records or a medical carried out in the Reception class;
- statutory assessment tests;
- teacher assessments (formative and summative) and end of year records.

The Class Teacher has a responsibility for:

- identifying a child's SEN;
- matching work to the individual child's ability ;
- monitoring the progress of individuals;

- liaising with parents, children and the SENCO;
- liaising with the SENCO and outside agencies;
- guidance and collaboration with Support Teachers.

The learning support teacher has a responsibility for:

- liaising and collaborating with the Class Teacher, SENCO, parents and outside specialists;
- assisting in the preparation of individual pupil or group programmes of work;
- working directly from the provision map, support plan or IEP to support and monitor targets;
- adapting teaching materials to make them accessible to the child;
- devising, contributing and supervising home/school communication books, social stories and specific visual timetables;
- delivering short daily learning programmes including speech and language programmes;
- supporting individuals on a one-to-one basis or as part of a group either in or out of the classroom;
- working with the class while the Class Teacher supports an individual or group;
- recording work covered and progress;
- reinforcing the child's learning using specialised equipment;
- supervising the practising of skills;
- providing practical help, including ensuring the child's safety in activities such as PE, swimming and school outings;
- delivering sensory diets (occupational therapy programmes);
- assisting the child with mobility difficulties;
- trying to maintain a balance between supporting the child when help is needed and allowing the child to develop maximum independence;
- attending relevant training to extend knowledge and expertise (continuing professional development).

11. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM, INCLUDING THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND PROVISION

Whenever possible children with SEN take part in all activities within the school and their needs are taken into account when planning outside visits and school journeys.

We follow the advice in the National Curriculum framework on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with SEN. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in EHCPs.

“All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement states that teachers should set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove

barriers to pupil achievement. In many cases, such planning will mean that pupils with special educational needs and disabilities will be able to study the full national curriculum.”

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (6.12)

Special educational provision at St Mary Magdalen’s is underpinned by high quality teaching and is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN.

Teachers monitor the progress of all pupils regularly to review their progress. We also use a range of assessments with all the pupils at various points, including national end of Key Stage tests, the national KS1 Phonics Screening Check and Testbase publications.

The principle of early identification and intervention underpins our approach to identifying those pupils who need extra help. This is often put in place, even if special educational need has not been identified. This extra support will enable the pupil to catch up.

Despite high quality targeted teaching some pupils may continue to make insufficient progress. For these pupils, and in consultation with parents, strengths and weaknesses are identified and used to identify an appropriate individualised intervention programme. In many cases these underlying needs often explain inadequate progress or challenging behaviour. At times it may be necessary to consult with outside agencies to receive more specialised expertise.

The purpose of this more detailed assessment and review is to understand what additional resources and different approaches are required to enable the pupil to make better progress. These will be shared with parents, put into an IEP or support plan and reviewed regularly. At this point, because the pupil requires additional and extra provision, we will have identified that the pupil has a special educational need.

If the pupil makes good progress using this additional and different intervention (but would not be able to maintain this good progress without it) we will continue to identify the pupil as having a special educational need. If the pupil is able to maintain good progress without the additional and different resources he or she will not be identified with SEN.

In a small number of cases where additional support and funding is required long term, the school may make a request to the LA for a full statutory assessment, the result of which can result in the LA drawing up an EHCP. This would formally set out the pupil’s needs, how and where they would best be met and reviewing the provision regularly.

12. EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROVISION

Regular monitoring and review will focus on the extent to which planned outcomes have been achieved. The views of the pupil, parents, Class Teachers and support staff will be taken into account. The assessment information from teachers will show whether adequate progress is being made.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015) describes adequate progress as:

- is similar to that of children of the same age who had the same starting point;

- matches or improves on the pupil's previous rate of progress;
- which allows the attainment gap to close between the pupil and children of the same age.

13. USE MADE OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Specialists from outside the school support class teachers, support staff and the SENCO. Their contact details are available via the SENCO. Referrals for support are completed by the SENCO in consultation with parents and teachers.

Access to many outside agencies is free for the school via a termly hourly allowance system. Other agencies are accessed via the in-service agreement 'buy back' service. Records and details of involvement are kept in the pupil's SEN folders kept by the SENCO.

EnhanceAble, a local voluntary sector organisation, delivers the Parent Partnership Service and provides free, impartial, confidential, advice, support and options around educational issues for parents/carers who have children with SEND (0-19/25). The Parent Partnership Service aims to ensure that parents and carers are empowered and can play an informed role in planning provision to meet their child's SEND. The Parent Partnership Service aims to build partnerships between parents and carers, the LA and schools. The service also encourages parents and carers to be involved in the development of local SEND policy and practice. They can be contacted on:

Helpline: 020 8547 3014

Website: www.enhanceable.org

Further information about support services and advice available through the local authority can be found at:

https://www.afcinfo.org.uk.local_offer

0208 547 4722

Email: sendlocaloffer@achievingforchildren.org.uk

The special educational needs and disability information, advice and support service (SENDIASS) can be found at:

<http://www.RKsendiass.co.uk>

08081645527

Email: info@rksendiass.co.uk

14. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Where parents are actively involved in working collaboratively with the school in supporting their child's learning this makes a significant difference. For this reason parents' views and knowledge of their child are encouraged and taken into account at all stages. Staff aim to

be approachable so that views can be exchanged freely and, although not always available at a moment's notice, are willing to meet parents at an agreed time. Staff need to discuss strategies and approaches with parents so this can take place:

- when a plan of work is initially set up;
- when a plan of work is reviewed;
- at parents' evenings.

15. LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

Special schools and units within the borough have open days each term at which staff and parents of St. Mary Magdalen's are welcome. Visits at other times can be arranged by appointment. The SENCO or other members of staff may be available to accompany parents on these visits if required.

Within Richmond, initial information about each child's SEN is passed on to the receiving secondary school well before induction day. This gives Year Heads and SENCOs time to prepare. Additional staffing, resources and timetabling are vital to ensure a smooth transition for the child. Where pupils with EHCPs have transitional reviews their preferred secondary school SENCO is invited to attend.

Close links are kept with out of borough Catholic schools and each pupil takes examples of their work to interview. The Richmond borough early information form is also available to these schools and visits between staff are arranged so that further information can be exchanged.

Pupils from St. Mary Magdalen's may receive temporary placements in special units such as Heathfield or Darrell while statemented or awaiting finalisation of an EHCP.

16. HEALTH, SOCIAL AND WELFARE SERVICES

The school has access to the above services through the following:

- Height, weight, vision and hearing tests carried out whilst pupils are in Reception class. New pupils in other classes are included in these if required;
- Other suspected medical issues are discussed between staff and parents and may initially involve the support of the School Nurse. Referrals to the School Nurse are usually made via the SENCO;
- The Headteacher and SENCO are available to advise on referrals to Social Services via the LA Single Point of Access;
- Termly monitoring visits from the school's attached EWO also help to identify and tackle issues concerning health and school attendance.

17. SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

The school recognises that children with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.

Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where it is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have SEN and may have an EHCP which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special education provision and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015) is followed.

Parents are invited to read the school's Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy. Parents are also asked to inform and discuss the implications of their child's medical condition with the Headteacher and SENCO, prior to the child starting the school or medication.

18. SAFEGUARDING

The school ensures that child protection and safeguarding procedures are adhered to for all pupils including those with SEN.

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. For such children additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect. These can include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's disability without further exploration;
- the potential for children with SEND being disproportionately impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without further exploration;
- communication barriers and difficulties in overcoming these barriers.

When necessary, adjustments are made to enable children with SEN to access all school activities relating to safeguarding and keeping children safe.

Staff supporting children with SEND receive regular safeguarding training and are aware of their responsibilities regarding pupil disclosures and reporting obligations.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Wendy Burns and Martin Brannigan, Sally Derby and Jennifer Miller are Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. The designated governors for Safeguarding and Child Protection is Claire Grindal.

19. IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Staff training needs are initially met within the school, identified and achieved by the SENCO working closely with the SLT and Class Teachers. The SENCO works with teachers and support staff to devise, monitor and evaluate Individual/Group Education Plans and target sheets. Specialised training is 'needs led' specific to a pupil or condition.

The LA provides training sessions regarding SEN and these are attended by at least one member of staff, often the SENCO. The training opportunities are advertised in the LA's "Learning Needs Team" termly newsletter.

Support staff as well as all Class Teachers participate in our annual performance management cycle. This is another forum in which training needs are identified or requested.

The Headteacher keeps a termly record of attendance on training courses and INSET. This information is represented in the Headteacher's Report to Governors.

When reviewing curriculum policies, children with SEN will be taken into account. A statement will be made in each policy with reference to this.

20. RESOURCES/SPENDING

The resource budget is determined and reviewed annually by the Headteacher and the governing board according to the changing needs of the school.

The purchasing and allocation of resources is organised by the SENCO according to the needs of pupils.

The employment of learning support staff is determined by the Headteacher and the governing board and is influenced by the requirements and the number of EHCPs.

21. COMPLAINTS

Parents are invited to approach the school at the earliest opportunity if they have a complaint concerning their child. Parents are advised to seek an appointment with their child's Class Teacher in the first instance. A meeting between the Class Teacher, parents and SENCO may then be arranged if appropriate. The Headteacher would be kept informed by the Class Teacher so that, if she is required to be involved at the next stage, she would be aware of the situation. The governors should be consulted after these initial steps have been taken and prior to the involvement of the LA.

22. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF OUR POLICY

The success of the SEND Policy will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

- to have accurate and up to date assessments of each child with SEN;
- to monitor the level of positive parental partnership through the Headteacher's report each term to the full governing board;
- through monitoring by the Headteacher/SENCO of SEN throughout the school, to ensure consistency of SEN provision; an evaluation of this monitoring to be included in the Headteacher's report each term to the governing board;
- through analysis and response to parental views via questionnaires.