St Mary's Catholic Primary School

# SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY POLICY

We grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus

| SENCO: Mrs J. Chidlow | |
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| **Approved by:** | |
| **Name:** | **Miss N. Pettitt** |
| **Position:** | **SEND Governor** |
| **Signed:** | N. Pettitt |
| **Date:** | **08/01/2026** |
| **Proposed review date[2]:** | November 2026 |

## Review Sheet

**The information in the table below details earlier versions of this document with a brief description of each review and how to distinguish amendments made since the previous version date (if any).**

| Version Number | Version Description | Date of Revision |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | • Update to policy | Feb 2008 |
| 3 | - Annual update to policy | April 2009 |
| 4 | • Update to policy | November 2010 |
| 5 | • Update to policy | June 2012 |
| 6 | • Major overhaul to update and ensure policy reflects statutory changes in SEN | Nov 2014 |
| 7 | • Update policy to reflect current practice | October 2016 |
| 8 | • Annual update to policy | November 2017 |
| 9 | • Annual update to policy | November 2018 |
| 10 | • Annual update to policy | November 2019 |
| 11 | • Annual update to policy | November 2020 |
| 12 | • Update to policy to reflect current practice | November 2021 |
| 13 | • Annual Update to policy | November 2022 |
| 14 | • Annual Update to policy | November 2023 |
| 15 | • Update to policy to reflect current practice | April 2024 |
| 16 | • Update to policy to reflect current practice | November 2024 |
| 17 | • Annual Update to policy | November 2025 |
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At St. Mary's we work together to make our school a happy and welcoming place where children can develop their confidence and self-esteem and achieve their full potential. We aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children which is specifically designed to meet individual needs and abilities. We are committed to providing an inclusive environment which allows our children to flourish and learn.

Children may have a SEN/D throughout their school career. This policy ensures that curriculum planning and assessment take account of the type and extent of the difficulties experienced by the pupil. Teachers consider in their planning, a pupil's special educational needs and/or disabilities and the provision made therefore enables them to participate effectively in all curriculum and assessment activities in addition to the broader aspects of school life.

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory and non-statutory guidance. See Appendix 1

**The Definition of SEND**

A child or young person has SEN if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. They have a learning difficulty or disability if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- Disability or health condition that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities used by peers of the same age.

(The SEND Code of Practice 0-25 years 2015)

**The Definition of Disability**

Under the Equality Act 2010, a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

**Types and Categories of Special Educational Needs**

Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

The school plans, manages and reviews SEND provision across the four broad areas of need as set out in the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice (2015). These are identified as:

Communication and Interaction

Cognition and Learning

Social, emotional and mental health

Sensory and/or physical needs-details are found in Appendix 2

St Mary's has a named Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), **Mrs Jane Chidlow**, who is a qualified teacher and holds the National SENCO Award and two named Governors who share the responsibility for SEND, **Miss Nicola Pettitt and Mrs Lucy Brannon**.

Further information about SEND in St. Mary's can be found on the school website at www.kells-stmarys.cumbria.sch.uk

**Objectives**:

- To identify and provide support as early as possible so children can reach their full potential.
- To create an environment that meets the special needs of each child where all children are valued and have respect for each other.
- To encourage children to develop their confidence and self-esteem and to recognize the value of their own contributions to their learning.
- To use our best endeavours to make sure that all pupils with SEND get the support they need to access our broad and balanced curriculum.
- To make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND so they are not at a substantial disadvantage with their peers and can engage in activities alongside their peers.
- To ensure all pupils with SEND are perceived positively by the school community.
- To ensure parents/carers are kept fully informed and are engaged in effective communication about their child's SEND.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### The Governing Body

The SEN Governors, Miss Nicola Pettitt and Mrs Lucy Brannon, will:

- Work with the Head and SENCO to ensure the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in school
- Ensure the school meets its duties in relation to supporting pupils with SEND
- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues to the whole governing body
- Ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO

### The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring the school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, with high quality teaching and a positive and enriching educational experience for all pupils, including pupils with SEND.The Head will:

- Manage the school's SEN development by working with the SENCO and SEN Governor to ensure the strategic development of the SEN provision in school
- Ensure the school holds ambitious expectations for all pupils with SEND.

- Establish and sustain culture and practices that enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and learn effectively.
- Ensure the school works effectively in partnership with parents, carers and professionals, to identify the additional needs and SEND of pupils, providing support and adaptation where appropriate.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties with regard to the SEND code of practice.
- Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachieving as a part of school's performance management arrangements.
- Ensure that procedures and policies for the day-to-day running of the school do not directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils with SEND.

<u>The SENCO will</u>:

- Work with the Head teacher and the SEN Governor to ensure the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have the day-to-day responsibility for the operation and implementation of the SEND policy and the co-ordination of provision made to support pupils with SEND
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support so pupils receive high quality teaching
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupil's needs
- Provide guidance and advice to colleagues and liaising with parents and external agencies to ensure children receive the best provision
- Be a key point of contact for external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services
- Work with the relevant governors and Head Teacher to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, regarding reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- Liaise with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies as required.
- Liaise with the local high schools to ensure that pupils and their parents are informed about the options, and a smooth transition is planned.
- Liaise with parents of pupils with SEND.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff members, parents and other agencies, including SEND charities.
- Be familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and being able to work with professionals who are providing a supporting role to the family.
- Ensure, as far as possible, that pupils with SEND take part in activities run by the school, together with those who do not have SEND.
- Ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up-to-date
- Informing the parents of pupils with SEND, who do not have an EHC plan, that SEND provision is being made.
- Contribute to the training of staff.

Teachers will:

- Be responsible for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from Teaching Assistants and support staff.
- Identify and plan differentiated work for pupils with SEND on a graduated approach, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO and, where appropriate, the pupils themselves.
- Plan lessons to address potential areas of difficulty to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- Be aware of the needs, outcomes sought, and support provided to any pupils with SEND they are working with.
- Setting high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum.
- Understand and implement strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils with the support of the SENCO.
- Work with the SENCO to review progress and to decide on any changes to provision and keep the SENCO and Head up-to-date with any changes in behaviour, academic developments and causes of concern.
- Work closely with support staff to plan and assess the impact of interventions.
- Maintain a class SEND file which is kept in the classroom for reference by all staff.
- Ensure they follow this SEND policy.

**Identification of SEN**

The SENCO will work with all staff to ensure that pupils who may need additional or different support to that normally found in class will be identified as soon as possible as we recognise that early identification and effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the pupils. With the support of the SLT, classroom teachers will conduct regular progress assessments for all pupils, with the aim of identifying pupils who are making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances.

Where a pupil is making less than expected progress, this can be characterised by progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- fails to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

This may also include progress in other areas for example social and emotional needs.

Slow progress and low attainment do not always mean a pupil is recorded as having SEN. We will use the Identification of SEND at St. Mary's (Appendix 3) to decide whether a pupil needs something different or additional to the rest of their class. When deciding whether SEN provision is required we will look at the needs of the whole child by considering a range of evidence including formal and informal assessments, discussions with the parent and child, attendance. It is recognised that there are occasions when progress and attainment are affected by factors other than SEN. For example:

- Having a disability
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- Using English as an additional language (EAL)
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked After Child

Where this is the case, appropriate provision will be made, but this does not automatically necessitate the child receiving Special Education Provision. These children will be monitored and may be placed on the Additional Needs Register.

**Early Years Pupils with SEND**

We will ensure all staff who work with young children are aware of emerging difficulties and will respond early raising first concerns with parents/carers. Staff will listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child. The SENCO will coordinate SEND provision with the Early Years Lead.

All early years providers are required to have arrangements in place to identify and support children with SEND and to promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. These requirements are set out in the EYFS framework.

The school will:

· Ensure that staff listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development, as well as listening to any concerns raised by children themselves.

· Monitor and review the progress and development of all children throughout the early years.

· Use its best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEND gets the support they need.

· Ensure that children with SEND engage in the activities of school alongside children who do not have SEND.

· Designate a teacher to be the SENCO.

· Provide information for parents on how it supports children with SEND.

· Inform parents when the school makes special educational provision for their child.

· Follow a graduated approach to assessing, planning, implementing, and reviewing provision and progress – the 'assess, plan, do, review' cycle.

**A Graduated Approach to SEND Support**

Teachers monitor the progress of all pupils regularly and this is informed by regular formal and informal assessments, as well as observation and discussion. Meetings are held every term to discuss progress and the class teachers consult with the SENCO when evidence shows concerns about a child's progress to see what can be done. Progress will be achieved by focussing on classroom organisation, teaching materials and style of teaching. These strategies will be reviewed and if they have not helped the child may require help that is additional to or different from their peers.

The first step to responding to a pupil with SEN will be high quality teaching.

If a pupil needs additional support, this will be provided through SEND Support. The pupil will be added to the SEND register after discussions with the parents. Provision will be monitored regularly through an Individual Education Plan (IEP). The SENCO will work with the staff, parents and pupil to set and monitor targets. This will be done at least three times during the year.

Once a child has been identified with SEND, the school will employ a graduated approach to meeting the child's needs. This will be through the adoption of a four-part cycle - **assess, plan, do, review** - whereby earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. The process is as follows:

· **Assess**: establishing a clear assessment of the pupil's needs

· **Plan**: agreeing the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review

· **Do**: implementing the agreed interventions and support

· **Review**: analysing the effectiveness of the interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress in line with the agreed review date

Where higher levels of need are identified, the school will access specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of a pupil, they have not made expected progress, the school, in consultation with parents, will consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

The school will consider whether additional pastoral support and attention for pupils with SEND is required, alongside ensuring that any appropriate support for communication is in place.

## Statutory Assessment of SEN

If a child still does not make progress, despite SEN Support, then the school can request a statutory assessment from the Local Authority that may lead to an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This will be done after consultation with parents.

The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the SEND of the pupil, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and prepare them for adulthood.

The school will provide the evidence about the child's progress over time. If the Local Authority agrees to an assessment it must assess the needs of that child. It will then decide whether to issue an EHCP.

If, following the assessment, the LA decides not to issue an EHC plan, the school will be provided with written feedback collected during the EHC needs assessment. It will use this information to contribute to the graduated approach and inform how the outcomes sought for the pupil can be achieved through further special educational provision made by the school and its partners.

Where the LA decides to issue an EHC plan, it must consult the prospective school by sending a copy of the draft plan and consider their comments before deciding whether to name it in the pupil's EHC plan. The school will meet its duty to provide views on a draft EHC plan within 15 days.

An EHCP must be reviewed at least annually. The SENCO initiates the process of inviting all to the meeting. Any amendments to the EHCP will be recorded and sent to the LA. Where a pupil is transferring to another phase of education, the review will be carried out in sufficient time to enable an effective transfer.

Further information can be found on the LA website www.cumberland.gov.uk

## Supporting Pupils and Families

The school is committed to working closely with parents who are encouraged to share their knowledge of their child. Where a pupil is receiving SEND Support, the school will liaise with parents in setting outcomes and reviewing progress. The class teacher, supported by the SENCO will meet with parents at least three times a year. The parents are encouraged to be involved in setting targets, reviewing progress and being part of the transition process. The parents' views are valued and they are treated as partners and given support to play an active part in their child's progress.

Parents of children with EHCPs are also invited to a yearly review. For children in Early Years this is every six months.

The school recognises the importance of supporting children to be successful into adulthood from a young age and will seek to understand the strengths, interests and motivations. They will help them to develop friendships and encourage all children to participate fully in the life of the school.

The SENCO signposts parents to relevant support groups that are available and they are made aware of the parent information on the school website.

Parents are made aware of the Local Offer which can be found at www.cumberland.gov.localoffer and they are also made aware of the Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS). This information is contained in the Parent Information leaflet which is given to parents when their child starts SEN Support.

**Safeguarding**

The school recognises that evidence shows children with SEND are at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment and will ensure staff are aware children with SEND may be disproportionately affected by bullying, face additional risks from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are at greater risk of neglect, sexual violence or harassment.

Bullying is taken very seriously at St. Mary's. Staff and governors endeavour to generate a culture of inclusion, support and care among pupils. The school's stance on bullying forms part of the Behaviour Policy and can be viewed on the school's website at www.kells-stmarys.cumbria.sch.uk

The school recognises there are barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group e.g. communication difficulties, peer group isolation and changes to behaviour and mood. These barriers are reflected in the school's Safeguarding Policy and all staff take care to notice any changes in mood and behaviour or injuries and to investigate these in collaboration with the DSL. School staff will be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for pupils with SEND and additional needs. The governing board and head teacher will ensure that pupils with SEND are taught about how to keep themselves and others safe including online. The school will ensure that teaching of safeguarding is tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND.

Our Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is Mrs Susan Starkie.

Our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Mrs Carley Miller.

**Admissions**

Pupils with SEND will be admitted to St. Mary's in line with the school's Admissions Policy. The school will ensure it meets its duties set under the DfE's "School Admissions Code and will meet the requirements of the Children and Families Act 2014. The policy is available on the school website. www.kells-stmarys.cumbria.sch.uk

## Transition

When a pupil transfers to another school, full records of their special educational needs will be sent to the receiving school. On transfer to secondary school the Year 6 teacher and SENCO meet with the SENCO of the receiving school to discuss the needs of individual pupils.

Where pupils have EHC plans, these will be reviewed and amended in sufficient time prior to a pupil moving between key phases of education. This allows for planning, provision and support at the new setting. An invitation will be issued for the SENCO of the receiving school to attend the transition review.

## Supporting Successful Preparation for Adulthood

The school is aware that being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for pupils with SEND. It recognises the importance of starting early, centring on pupil aspirations, interests and needs, and will ensure that pupils are supported at developmentally appropriate levels to make a smooth transition to what they will be doing next, e.g. moving on to higher education.

The school will:

- Seek to understand the interests, strengths and motivations of pupils and use this as a basis for planning support around them.
- Support pupils so that they are included in social groups and develop friendships.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school together with those who do not have SEND, and are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the school and in any wider community activity.
- Engage with secondary schools, as necessary, to help plan for any transitions.

## Staff Training and Improving Practice

Our SENCO is a qualified teacher and has achieved the National SENCO Award. They are allocated two days a week to manage SEN provision.

The SENCO keeps abreast of current research and thinking and will disseminate knowledge or skills during staff meetings or consultation with individual staff. The SENCO will be supported to enhance their knowledge, skills and abilities through courses and support from other professionals.

Training for teachers and teaching assistants is provided both in school and through other professional development activities.

SEND training is included in staff meetings and INSET to reflect the needs of the staff.

The SEN Governor will ensure they are kept fully aware of their statutory responsibilities by attending training and receiving regular updates from the head teacher and the SENCO.

**Resources**

Where additional pupil needs are identified the school will use its delegated funding allowance to provide early intervention support for the benefit of pupils identified with SEND.

Funding received for an EHCP is allocated to ensure appropriate provision. This comes from the LA's High Needs Block and is sometimes called Top Up Funding. It is used to fund the support needed to meet the needs of a child with an EHCP. The Head and SENCO meet at least annually to agree how funding is allocated. The effectiveness of the resources will be monitored as an on-going process.

**Accessibility**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2002, placed a duty on all schools and LAs to plan to increase, over time, the accessibility of schools for pupils with disabilities. St Mary's publishes its Accessibility Plan on its website. www.kells-stmarys.cumbria.sch.uk

**Storing and Managing Information**

The confidential nature of SEND information is fully recognised at St. Mary's Catholic Primary School. Hard copies of information are stored in the office next to the Head Teacher's office whilst electronic files are stored on Staffshare with protected access.

**Complaints Procedure**

Our school is committed to resolving disagreements and concerns as quickly as possible. The school's complaints procedures can be found on the school website or requested from the school office.

Should a parent or carer have a concern about the SEN provision made for their child they should in the first instance discuss this with the class teacher who will inform the SENCO.

If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, parents have recourse to the following:

- Discuss the problem with the SENCO
- Discuss the problem with the Head

If matters are not resolved informally then they will be referred to the school's complaints policy. Where the complaint is about Statutory Assessment of SEN the school will contact the LA to seek disagreement resolution advice.

## Monitoring and Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually and ratified by the Governing Body. It will be updated if any changes to the information are made during the year. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff, parents of pupils with SEND.

## Appendix 1

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation, but not limited to the following:

· Local Government Act 1974

· Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986

· Children Act 1989

· Education Act 1996

· Education Act 2002

· Mental Capacity Act 2005

· Equality Act 2010

· The Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010

· Children and Families Act 2014

· The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014

· The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015

· The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015

· The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

· Data Protection Act 2018

· Health and Care Act 2022

This policy has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

· DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'

· DfE (2015) 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'

· DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023'

· DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'

· DfE 'School Admissions Code'

· [Updated] DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2025'

· Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) (2015) 'Reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils'

**Links to Other Policies**

This policy links to:

- Accessibility Plan
- Admissions Plan
- Behaviour
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality Objectives
- SEN Information Report
- Medical

# Appendix 2

## Communication and Interaction

Pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others, often because they have difficulty saying what they want, they cannot understand what is being said to them, or they do not understand or use social rules of communication.

## Cognition and learning

Pupils with learning difficulties can cover a wide range of needs, such as moderate learning difficulty (MLD), severe learning difficulty (SLD) and profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). The SENCO will ensure that any provision offered will be suitable to the needs of the pupil. Specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

## Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties

Pupils may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties that manifest themselves in many ways, including becoming withdrawn or isolated, or displaying challenging, disruptive and disturbing behaviour. The school recognises that these behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, and the school will ensure that provision is made to support pupils with these difficulties. Other children may have attention deficit hyperactive disorder.

## Sensory or physical needs

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning. Some children and young people with a physical disability require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

## Appendix3

## Identification of SEND at St Mary's CP School

