

The Cathedral School of St. Mary



SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT

The Cathedral School of St. Mary

Mission Statement

Together we will:

- promote a catholic ethos of caring and forgiveness;
- nurture the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and physical development of each person;
- be free to express ourselves in a safe environment;
- share in the life of our family, Federation and community.

Express, Forgive, Care, Share, Nurture

CATHOLIC ACADEMIC COUNCIL SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENT Principles

Our Catholic Schools believe that all the children who attend our schools have access to a broad and balanced curriculum suitably differentiated to meet their individual needs.

We seek to promote effective learning for all our children in order that they make progress, realise potential and develop a sense of self-worth.

Our schools fully support the principles outlined in the DfE SEN Code of Practice (C.O.P.) January 2015, which incorporates a *graduated approach* in meeting pupils' needs.

It is our belief that the views of the child and parents are central to this process.

Rationale

As a Federation, we believe that:

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. (6.15)

Provision for children with special educational needs is a whole school responsibility. All class teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs.

Each school has a designated member of staff – Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who, in collaboration with the Executive Headteacher, the

Head of Learning, class teachers and the governing body, is responsible for implementing this policy. The SENCO provides further support and advice and facilitates the sharing of good practice.

Role and Responsibility of the SENCO

Each Catholic School has a coordinator of SEN. The key responsibilities of the Senco may include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support
- advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively

- liaising with parents of pupils with SEN
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned
- working with the headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- ensuring that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up to date.

(6.9)

At The Cathedral School of St Mary the Special Educational Needs Coordinator is Beth Williams.

The Governor with responsibility for Special Educational Needs is to be appointed.

The governing body and the staff of The Cathedral School of St Mary agree with the principles and rationale set out in the policy statement at the beginning of this document.

This policy will be reviewed every year in the Autumn Term.

SEN support in schools - Assess, Plan, Do, Review

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four-part cycle through which 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. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people. (6.44)

A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age. Making higher quality teaching normally available to the whole class is likely to mean that fewer pupils will require such support. Such improvements in whole-class provision tend to be more cost effective and sustainable. (6.15)

The Code of Practice (2015, 6.28) identifies four main areas of difficulty:

- **Communication and Interaction**
- **Cognition and Learning**
- **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Development**
- **Sensory and/or Physical**

Pupil progress meetings will be held each term during which SEN issues or concerns may be discussed. Children who have been identified as having SEN are kept on an Inclusion List, updated termly. SEN resources are allocated according to the needs of the children.

In addition, each class teacher (and TA) will meet with the Senco to plan appropriate IEP targets and/or strategies for children with SEN.

THE GRADUATED APPROACH

This is a flexible model of action and intervention in schools for all children.

The approach recognises that there is a continuum of SEN. Each class teacher is responsible for providing a differentiated curriculum for all the children as part of their high quality teaching (Pathway 1). They can also utilise targeted interventions to support progress where necessary (Pathway 2). Where a child is recognised by the school, parents and sometimes themselves, as having a

special educational need, specialist expertise can be sought. This is intended to address and minimise the difficulties that they are experiencing (Pathway 3).

Only children on Pathway 3 will be included on the SEN register.

It is important to note that children who are recognised as having a SEN may not always need to be on the SEN register. Their needs may be met on Pathway 2 (through targeted intervention) or on Pathway 1 (high quality teaching).

Similarly, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability' (6.20).

Of equal importance is the understanding, that 'slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and *should not* automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN' although 'they *may* be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities' (6.20)

The Code of Practice 2015 has only two categories to be recorded on the SEN register. **SEN Support and Statement/EHC Plan.**

Pathway 1 – High Quality Teaching

'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...Lessons should be planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement' (Code of Practice 2015, 6.11).

Pathway 2 – Targeted Intervention

When a class teacher identifies that a child is making little or no progress, he or she will provide extra support or an intervention, which is additional to the differentiated curriculum. The effectiveness of this chosen intervention will be monitored and the progress of the child will be analysed.

Pathway 3 – SEN Support

Where the class teacher identifies that a child is making (or continuing to make) 'less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances' (6.14) and despite *sustained* and *intensive* support they may raise a concern with the SENCo. The SENCo will consider what interventions have gone before and will invite the parents in to discuss the concerns.

The Code of Practice states that a 'pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, that is provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age' (6.12).

If the parents and pupil (if appropriate) agree that there might be a special educational need the child can be added to the SEN register. Also, the use of more personalised interventions or the advice, assessment or support of relevant outside agencies will be sought.

The child is placed as **SEN support** on the register.

The class teacher remains responsible for the child's progress and an Individual Education Plan will usually be devised.

The SENCO should oversee the planning of future interventions. The SENCO will also monitor and review action. Strategies employed to enable the child to progress should be recorded within the Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Individual Education Plans:

The IEP is a *working document* that can help to document small steps of progress and continuing areas of difficulty.

The IEP will include:

- The short-term (SMART) targets set for the child
- The teaching strategies to be used
- The provision to be put in place
- Outcomes/progress

When the plan is to be reviewed

Education Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan)

The purpose of an EHC plan is to meet the special educational needs of a child and to secure the best possible outcomes across **education, health** and **social care** and as they get older, prepare them for adulthood (9.2).

The majority of children and young people with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within local mainstream early years settings, schools or colleges (see information on identification and support in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 of Code of Practice 2015).

Some children and young people may require an *EHC Needs Assessment* in order for the Local Authority to decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan (9.1).

An *EHC Needs Assessment* will **not** always lead to an EHC plan. The information gathered during an *EHC needs assessment* may indicate ways in which the school, college or other provider can meet the child or young person's needs without an EHC plan.(9.6)

The following people have a specific right to ask a local authority to conduct an education, health and care needs assessment for a child or young person aged between 0 and 25:

- The child's parent
- A young person over the age of 16 but under the age of 25, and
- A person acting on behalf of a school or post-16 institution (this should ideally be with the knowledge and agreement of the parent or young person (9.8)

Time Scale for an EHC assessment

The whole process of the EHC needs assessment and EHC plan development until the final EHC plan will take no more than 20 weeks.

An EHC needs assessment will not always lead to an EHC plan. The information gathered during an EHC needs assessment may indicate ways in which school can meet the child's needs without an EHC plan (9.6).

Promoting the Rights of the child (6.65)

We should 'listen to and address any concerns raised by the children and young people themselves' (6.17).

We actively seek to involve the child (as appropriate) when discussing which strategies and/or interventions could meet their special educational needs. At times they will be involved in creating their own Pupil Passports and may help in setting or reviewing their targets for their IEPs. They will also be encouraged to reflect on and evaluate their progress and performance.

Promoting partnership with parents and carers

Our school actively seeks to work with parents/carers and values the contribution they make. 'Parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development' (6.17). We will have a discussion with parents (and sometimes pupils) when a concern is raised. We will discuss the pupil's areas of strength and difficulties, the parent's perspective, agreed outcomes sought for the child and next steps (6.36).

The school actively encourages an open dialogue with parents, both formal and informal.

The SENCO also liaises with appropriate external agencies *on behalf of* parents/carers of children with SEN, as well as acting on behalf of the children.

Where it is decided that a pupil does have SEN, the decision will be recorded in the school records and the pupil's parents will be informed by letter (6.39).

In-service Opportunities

The SENCO will keep up to date with relevant training and will inform teaching staff of courses that will help them provide for children with SEN in their care. The SENCO attends Plymouth SEN Conferences. Teaching Assistants will be encouraged to undertake in-service training to assist them in their work with these children. Where appropriate, the class teacher of a child with SEN will be given opportunities for training.

Parents will be informed by the Parent Support Adviser and SENCO of any support groups or programmes that may be relevant to their needs.

Governors will also be encouraged to attend relevant training.

The Duties of the Governing Body

The Governing Body must:

- do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN
- ensure that, where the 'responsible person' ,the Headteacher or the appropriate governor, has been informed by the LA that a pupil has SEN, those needs are made known to all that are likely to teach them
- ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those pupils who have SEN
- consult the LA and the governing bodies of other schools, when it seems to be necessary or desirable in the interests of coordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole
- ensure that a pupil with SEN joins in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have SEN.
- report to parents on the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with SEN
- have regard to the Code of Practice (2015) when carrying out its duties towards all pupils with SEN
- ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child.

Disability Discrimination Act

Children who are defined as having rights under the DDA have a wide range of potential needs and requirements. They include children with mobility impairments, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental health conditions, epilepsy, Aids, asthma and progressive conditions such as multiple sclerosis.

Not all children who are defined as having a disability under the DDA will have Special Educational Needs. For example, a child with severe asthma may not be identified as having SEN, but may well be defined as having a disability under the DDA.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed:..... Date:.....
(Chair of Governors)

Signed:..... Date:.....
(Head Teacher)

Signed...