

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Please note that this policy should be read in conjunction with the Behaviour Management Policy, the Bullying Policy and Access Policy.

St. Thomas' C.E. Primary School values the abilities and achievements of all its children and is committed to providing, for each child, the best possible environment for learning. Throughout our school we have a clear focus upon inclusion within a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum and are fully committed to developing a shared ethos of care, empathy and understanding.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the whole staff, with any extra provision or expertise being organised by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, with support, where appropriate from external agencies and professionals. It is intended that this policy statement will be used as a working document by all our staff, governors, parents and visitors.

The aims of our school

- To ensure that all pupils have access to an inclusive curriculum, that responds to children's diverse learning needs.
- To ensure the rapid identification of all children requiring SEND provision as early as possible in their school career.
- To work in partnership with parents and other agencies to ensure the needs of individual children are most effectively met.
- To ensure that SEND children are involved, where practicable, in decisions affecting their future provision.
- To ensure that SEND children take as full a part as possible in all school activities, trips and residential opportunities.
- To ensure that SEND children receive targeted support in order to accelerate their progress when compared to their starting points.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

We recognise that at different times within a child's school career, they may have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). The SEND Code of Practice states that:

"A child or young person has 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 has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age.
- 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."

If a child is identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability, we will strive to offer provision that is 'additional to or different from' the normal differentiated curriculum which is intended to support the child to overcome any barriers to learning.'

Roles and Responsibilities

High quality teaching which is differentiated and personalised to meet children's individual needs is available for all children. At the heart of our work is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessing and tracking of children, which takes into account the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of all our children. The majority of children will learn and progress within these arrangements. Those children whose overall attainments or attainment in specific subjects falls significantly outside the expected range may have a Special Educational Need.

Provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities is a matter for the school as a whole, with all our teachers being teachers of children with Special Educational Needs. All teachers are responsible for identifying pupils with SEND and, in collaboration with the SENCO, Mrs Parker, will ensure that those children requiring different or additional support are identified as early as possible.

Early Identification

Early identification of children with SEND is a key priority within our school using a range of appropriate screening and assessment tools to correlate a child's progress through:

- Evidence obtained from teacher observations and assessments.
- Progress of children in relation to their Foundation Stage profile and/or Key Stage One data.
- Progress of children in relation to age related performance descriptors.
- Standardised screening or assessment tools.
- Records from previous schools or settings.
- Information from parents and individual children.

The core of our teachers' work involves a continuous cycle of planning, teaching and assessing, taking into account the differences in children's abilities, aptitudes, and interests. Some children may require increased levels of provision to support them to achieve their targets. The Code of Practice 2014 advocates a graduated response to meeting children's individual needs. This will initially be achieved through careful differentiation by the class teacher. However, if children continue to experience difficulties, the class teacher will raise an initial concern with the SENCO, Mrs Parker. Following discussions with parents, children will be identified as requiring Additional SEN support within one of the four groups:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, mental and emotional health
- Sensory and /or physical.

SEN Support

SEN support is characterised by interventions that are additional to and different from the normal differentiated curriculum. This intervention can be triggered through concern, supplemented by evidence that, despite receiving differentiated teaching, individual children:

- aren't making expected progress

- demonstrate difficulty in developing literacy or numeracy skills
- demonstrate persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties which are not improved by behaviour management strategies
- have sensory or physical difficulties which require additional or specialist equipment in order for them to access the curriculum
- experience communication and/or interaction problems and make little or no progress despite receiving a differentiated curriculum.

The class teacher will remain responsible for planning and delivering individualised programmes and parents will be kept closely informed about the action and their effects. Children may only need this type of additional support for a short time within their school career, allowing them to make accelerated progress which places them within age related expectations.

Individual Education Plans (IEP)

Small stepped targets for children requiring SEN support will be recorded within an Individual Education Plan (IEP), with the children and parents involved within discussions regarding specific targets, which will include:

- A child's strengths and areas for development
- Short term targets
- Teaching strategies and identified provision
- The success criteria
- Date for review
- The outcomes recorded at review

The IEP will record only that which is 'additional to and different from' the normal differentiated curriculum, and will concentrate on two or three individual targets that closely match the child's needs.

Disability

Not all disabled pupils will have difficulties with their learning but they will have additional needs and therefore these pupils are included within our documentation.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 defines a disabled person as someone who has a "physical or mental impairment which has a substantial or long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities." With regard to the DDA guiding principles at St Thomas' we carry out the following:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled and non-disabled pupils.
- Eliminate any discrimination of disabled pupils within our school community.
- Eliminate harassment of disabled pupils.
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled pupils.
- Encourage their full participation in school life.

The SEN policy should be read in conjunction with the Disability Equality Duty Statement.

Access for pupils and visitors with a disability

At St. Thomas' we are committed to long term continuous improvement of facilities to ensure safe access for all pupils. We regularly seek outside professional advice on such matters. See also the school Access Policy Statement.

Behavioural Issues

At St. Thomas' all staff have the highest expectations of pupils with regard to behaviour. (See Behaviour Management Policy) Sometimes however poor behaviour becomes a barrier to learning. When this happens the teacher will work together with the child and their parents to create an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP). The child's behaviour will be closely monitored and a system of rewards to encourage good behaviour will be utilised. If however there is little or no improvement in the child's behaviour then school will request the help of outside agencies to offer further advice and support.

Request for Statutory Assessment

The school will request a Statutory Assessment from the LA when, despite an individualised programme of sustained intervention within SEN support, the child remains a significant cause for concern. A Statutory Assessment could also be requested by a parent.

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) can be provided where, after a Statutory Assessment, the LA considers the child requires provision beyond what the school can currently offer. However, the school recognises that a request for a Statutory Assessment does not inevitably lead to the creation of an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Education, Health and Care plans must be reviewed annually. The school, in discussions with parents and outside agencies, sets the date for the review of a child's EHCP. It is the SENCOs duty to organise these reviews and invite:

- The child's parents/carers
- The child, if appropriate
- The relevant teacher(s)
- A representative of the LA
- Any other professionals involved with the child

The aim of the review will be to:

- Assess the child's progress in relation to the IEP targets.
- Review the provision made for the child in the context of the curriculum, their levels of attainment in basic literacy/numeracy and key life skills.
- Consider the appropriateness of the existing Education, Health and Care plan in relation to the child's performance during the year, and whether to cease, continue, or amend it.
- Set new targets for the coming year.

Year 5 reviews will indicate the provision required in Secondary school. At Year 6 reviews the SENCO of the Secondary school will be invited to attend. This enables the receiving school to plan appropriately for the new school year. It also gives parents the opportunity to liaise with the Secondary SENCO to discuss any issues or concerns regarding transition.

The Role of the Class Teacher

The Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the teacher, whose responsibilities include:

- Being aware of the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of, and subsequent provision for children with SEND.
- Collaborating with the SENCO to decide what action is required to assist the child in making accelerated progress towards their age related expectations.
- Work closely with all parties to develop IEP's for children with SEND.
- Working with SEN pupils on a daily basis to plan and monitor the individual programme set out in the IEP.
- Developing constructive relationships with parents.

The Role of SENCO

The SENCO plays a crucial role in the school's SEND provision. This involves working with the Head teacher and Governing Body to determine the strategic development of the policy. Other responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the SEND policy
- Coordinating the provision for pupils with SEND
- Liaising and giving advice to fellow teachers
- Overseeing the records of pupils with SEND
- Liaising with parents
- Organising INSET opportunities
- Liaising with external agencies, LA support services, Health and Social Services and voluntary bodies.

The Role of the Governing Body

The Governing Body's responsibilities to children with SEND include:

- Ensuring that provision of a high standard is made for SEND pupils
- Ensuring that SEND pupils are fully involved in all school activities
- Having a regard to the Code of Practice when carrying out responsibilities
- Being fully involved in developing and subsequently reviewing the SEND policy and school offer.

The Governor responsible for SEND is: Mrs Melanie Girdharry

The Role of the Head teacher

The Head teacher's responsibilities include:

- The day-to-day management of all aspects of the work of the school, including the SEND provision
- Keeping the Governing Body well informed about SEND within the school.
- Working closely with the SENCO.
- Informing parents of the fact that SEND provision has been made for their child.

- Ensuring that the school has clear and flexible strategies for working with parents, and that these strategies encourage involvement in their child's education.

Partnership with Parents

At St. Thomas' we firmly believe in developing a strong partnership with parents and that this will enable children and young people with SEND to achieve their full potential. The school recognises that parents have a unique overview of the child's needs and how best to support them, and that this gives them a key role in the partnership.

"Parents hold key information and have a critical role to play in their children's education. They have unique strengths, knowledge and experience to contribute to the shared view of a child's needs and the best way of supporting them."

Complaints Procedure

The SEND Code of Practice outlines measures the LA must set up for preventing and resolving disagreements. These will be explained to parents if required.

Links with External Agencies/Organisations

The school recognises the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide support for, SEND pupils.

When it is considered necessary, colleagues from the following support services will be involved with SEND pupils:

- Educational Psychologists
- Medical Officers
- Speech Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Hearing impairment services
- Visual impairment services
- Warrington SEND service

In addition strong links have been forged with the following organisations:

- EWO
- The local Child Development Centre
- Local High Schools & Pre-school settings
- School Nurse
- CAMHS
- Social Services

SEN Policy Review

The school considers the SEN Policy document to be important and, in conjunction with the Governing Body, undertakes a review of both policy and practice each year.

Date of next scheduled review: October 2018