Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Policy

St Thomas More Catholic Secondary

COMMITTEE: - Local Academy Committee
DATE APPROVED: - March 2024
POLICY REVIEW DATE: - March 2026 (currently under review)

St Thomas More School
St John Rigby School
St Joseph's & St Gregory's School

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full
John 10:10

SEND Policy

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This policy offers a framework to guide and inform the practice of all in the area of special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) within the Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust

Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCo) Details

School	SENDCo/Director	Contact	Senior Leadership Team advocate	Qualifications
St John Rigby Primary	Hannah Ball	01234 401900	Michelle McGettigan	BE, NASENCO
St Joseph's & St Gregory's Primary	Katie Tustain	01234 352062	Gemma Otter	BEd Hons, SLE
St Thomas More Secondary	Iona Maguire	01234 400222 ext:3228	Carole Soraghan	BA Hons, PGCE, NPQ SENDCo

1. Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (1st September 2014) 3.65 and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (1st September 2014)
- Schools SEN Information Report Regulations (2014)

2. OLICAT Trust

St John Rigby, St Joseph's & St Gregory's and St Thomas More are Bedford based Catholic schools who are part of Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Academy Trust within the Diocese of Northampton

As a Catholic Trust the equality of the opportunities that we provide to children is central to our mission. We are committed to closing the attainment gaps that exist in our schools and ensuring that all children have equal access to the opportunities that education provides. We are working hard, in respect of our children with Special Educational needs and Disabilities, to ensure that provision for these children enables such access.

3. Definition of Special Educational needs

The Code of Practice (DfE, January 2014) states that:
A person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. At compulsory school age this means he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or, has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools. Taken from 2014 SEN Code of Practice: 0 to 25 Years.

4. Our Vision and Values support SEND pupils.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We pay particular attention to the provision for and the achievement of different groups of learners within our Catholic School Communities. For as St Paul wrote:

"There is a variety of gift but always the same spirit: there are all sorts of service to be done but always the same Lord working in all sorts of ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose."

"For surely I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord, "plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope." Jeremiah 29:11

As member schools in the OLICAT Trust, we are committed to providing an appropriate and high-quality education to all children in our school communities.

We believe that our two main goals are: -

Early identification of any SEND need in any of our children

Provision of bespoke, appropriate and impactful support to ensure children identified with a SEND need are able to achieve their potential.

To achieve these, we believe -

- All children are entitled to an academic and social curriculum, which is accessible.
- Children learn at different rates and there are many factors that may affect achievement, including ability, emotional state, age, and maturity.
- **All** teachers are teachers of SEND.
- All staff value pupils of all abilities.
- Strong partnerships with parents and carers are essential to develop secure foundations in which to support the children and young people in our care.
- Inclusion does not mean that all learners will have the same provision but that we will respond to learners in ways that take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

Through our SEND practice, we will ensure that every pupil.

- is supported to feel personally valued.
- Is helped to discover and develop his/her potential.
- has aspirational and achievable targets.
- develops respect, reverence and responsibility for themselves and others.
- can progress with confidence in their personal qualities and achievements at the end of their time in school.

5. Objectives

Our Trust schools are committed to:

1. Identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs.
2. Work within the guidance as set out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014.
3. Operate a "whole pupil, whole school" approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs.
4. Provide a **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCO)** who will work according to the SEND Policy.
5. Work in partnership with other Trust schools, and external agencies to enable access to effective targeted support.
6. Provide support and advice for all staff working with special educational needs pupils.
7. Recognise, value, and develop children and young people's spiritual wellbeing alongside their educational experience.

6. The SEND Team

Within each of our schools, our SEND team is composed of:

- Every class teacher ○ SENDCO ○ Governors ○ Headteacher
- SLT

Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The SENDCO will

- Work with the Headteacher and Governors to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services.
- Attend key meetings, as required, (for example EHCP annual reviews, initial meetings with parents, reviews) alongside other staff where appropriate to provide support and guidance.
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co- ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans.
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching.
- Monitor the progress made by pupils with SEND, using data on hibernation sheets, class provision maps, IEPs, Behaviour Plans, One Page profiles and EHCPs.
- Complete learning walks to monitor quality and effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support.
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure pupils and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.
- Complete referrals to external agencies, alongside class teachers and support staff, as required.

6.2 Governors will:

- Ensure that SEND is given appropriate time for discussion at governor meetings.
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability provision within the school.
- Work with the Headteacher and SENDCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

6.3 The Headteacher will:

- Work with the SENDCO and Governors to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEND

6.4 Class teachers are responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.
- Working with the SENDCO to review each pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to provision.
- Completion of referrals to outside agencies alongside the SENDCO
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

7. Identifying Special Educational Needs

All pupils should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Quality First Teaching should ensure that teachers set high expectations for every pupil, whatever their prior attainment. Teachers should use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.

We will use GL assessments annually as a screening tool. Potential areas of difficulty should be identified and addressed at the outset. Lessons are planned to address potential areas of difficulty and to remove barriers to pupil achievement. This planning of adaptation will mean that pupils with SEN and disabilities are able to study the full national curriculum.

From time to time, depending on the need, some children will receive individualised support. This does not necessarily mean that the child has special educational needs. Occasional individualised support is part of the provision 'normally available to pupils' as part of Quality First Teaching.

On entry to the Trust schools, pupils are assessed by staff; this assessment helps the SENDCos to determine the needs of pupils, alongside discussions with previous educational settings and discussions with staff and parents. The GL assessments are part of this process.

We have a Trust approach to SEND that is used by all schools within the Trust. This approach is reviewed regularly to ensure it meets the needs of all our school communities.

SENDCos also use the "Bedford Borough Council SEND Guidance on Special Educational Needs – a graduated response 2019" & "Guidance on Meeting Special Educational Needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage: a graduated response 2019" to assist in ascertaining the needs of pupils. We also use the OLICAT approach to SEND.

<u>Four Areas of Need</u>

The SEND Code of Practice 2014 (section 6.25-6.32) identifies four areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction – this will include those on the Autistic Spectrum
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, emotional, and mental health difficulties – this will include those with ADD/ADHD
- Sensory and/or physical needs

It may not be uncommon for a child or young person to have needs from a combination of these areas.

Some children or young people may have other needs such as English as an additional language or behavioural difficulties. Whilst these difficulties will be addressed, they may not, in themselves, be a special educational need.
Factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, neurodiversity, difficulties with communication or mental health issues may manifest through challenging behaviour. In these cases, a special educational need may be identified.

8. A Graduated Approach to SEN Support
All children within our care will have access to quality first teaching provided by each and every member of staff. All teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class/classes, including where pupils access support from learning support assistants or specialist staff.

High quality teaching, adapted for individuals and groups of pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have special educational needs. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality first teaching.

High quality teaching is promoted in our schools through performance management procedures, these may include:

- Learning walks
- Lesson observations • Work scrutiny.
- Structured conversations with staff
- Pupil voice
- Training
- Pupil progress meetings

The Trust Schools have systems for regularly observing, assessing, and recording the progress of **all** children and young people; this system is also used to identify those who may have additional needs that have not yet been recognised.

If teachers or parents are concerned about a child or young person, they will meet to discuss their concerns and complete an **assess, plan, do, review** document (APDR). This will identify needs as well as give targets and strategies to be used. This document is reviewed after an agreed period of time which should be no longer than half termly.

The schools take steps to apply the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle as indicated in the Code of Practice 2014. This forms the basis of the Trust SEND response and informs us of any steps going forward. If a period of intervention has not had the planned outcomes, then there is a possibility of a child or young person moving onto School Support within our SEND system. At this point a child or young person will be recorded on our Special Needs Register.

When on the register the rhythm of Assess Plan Do Review continues and if school support has not had the appropriate impact, then a referral can be made to specialist external agencies and professionals for further assessment and advice. All three schools use the services of Bedford Borough Psychology Service

Schools use a variety of assessment and organisational tools, conversations with teachers, support staff, parents, and learners to carry out the process effectively. If through the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle and with additional external advice and support it is found that the child or young person has not made adequate progress then an application for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment may be made to the Local Authority. In considering whether an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment is necessary, the Local Authority should consider whether there is evidence that despite the education provider, taking relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, they have not made expected progress. In this circumstance an assessment is carried out and an Education Health and Care Plan may be issued

If the child or young person has reached their desired outcomes or targets on the Assess Plan Do Review cycle, they will no longer be documented on the school system as having SEN Support and removed from the SEND register.

9. Admissions for pupils with SEND

Where a child that has a Special Educational Need or disability applies for a place at our school:

- The school administration team will seek and collate information from applicants about the child's needs as early as possible after application.
- They will inform the SEND administrator, the SENDCO and the head teacher.
- A plan will be made for the successful admission of the child to school. This may include. ○ A meeting with parents or carers to discuss strengths and challenges. ○ Reasonable adjustments to the physical and learning environment, in advance of the start date, to allow access.
  ○ Visits to the school by the child ○ Involvement of the class teacher and year team ○ Consideration of a phased admission if appropriate
- If the child has an Education Health and Care Plan, consideration of whether the school can meet the needs of the child will be made in the usual way.
- Very occasionally, all parties may agree that the school cannot meet the needs of the child. In this case, parents or carers will be supported by the school to contact the local authority, and any other appropriate agencies, for advice.

10. Transition

We know that moving from one school to another can be a challenging time. All three schoolwork closely with each other to eliminate the barriers to a smooth transition from Primary to Secondary.
We also work closely with all schools where students are transferring to or from to ensure that children and young people feel safe and settled in their new environments.
For our children and young people with SEND a rigorous and robust transition programme will allay fears and empower them to make a positive start in their new school.
Good transition communication should enable information to be shared between the schools to assist in the further identification of pupils with SEND.

For post-16 pupils, transition arrangements are in place between St Thomas More, Bedford College and other training providers.

Within each individual school, transition between years is facilitated by the sharing of information and opportunities for the children to meet their new teacher, where appropriate.

11. Medical Needs

All schools within the Trust recognise that pupils at school 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 this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have Special Educational Needs and may have an Education, Health and Care plan, which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. We will respond to the medical individual needs of each child or young person appropriately.

12. Training and Resources

The Trust Schools Arrangements for SEND and Inclusion In-Service Training

- All SENDCOs from the Trust attend network meetings within the Trust and the LA • All SENDCOs share information with Directors.
- Meeting additional needs and Inclusion issues are targeted each year through each respective school's long-term goals and School Development Plan. In-Service training and individual professional development is arranged and matched to these targets.
- In-house additional needs and Inclusion training is provided through staff meetings by the SENDCOs.
- All staff have access to professional development opportunities and are able to apply for additional needs or Inclusion training where a need is identified either at an individual pupil or whole class level.
- The Trust provide centralized training for support staff.
- Support staff are encouraged to extend their own professional development and each school's own SLT will ensure tailor-made training where this is appropriate for the setting.

Allocation of Resources to and amongst Pupils

- All resources are allocated by SENDCo and SLT to best support the needs of all pupils in line with their needs.

13. Supporting pupils and families.

The local authority's local offer can be found on the Bedford Borough website:
https://localoffer.bedford.gov.uk/kb5/bedford/directory/home.page

Bedford Parent Carer Forum - A Parent Carer Forum is a group of parents and carers of children with special educational needs or disabilities who work with local authorities, education settings, health providers and other

providers to make sure that the services they commission, plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children and families. https://www.bbpcf.co.uk/

SEND information reports are available on the individual school websites.

14. Links **with other policies and documents:**

- Accessibility plan
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality information and objectives
- Supporting pupils with medical needs
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy