

## St. Bridget's Catholic Primary School: Policy for Special Educational Needs

### Definition of Special Educational Needs

Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty* that calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- Have a **significantly** greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age.
- Have a disability that prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
- Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definitions above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

This SEND policy details how our school will do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs and those needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.

St Bridget's school will use its best endeavours to ensure that teachers and teaching assistants in the school are able to identify and provide for those pupils who have special educational needs to allow such pupils to join in the activities of the school together with pupils who do not have special educational needs, so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving the special educational provision and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated.

The school will have regard to the **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2014** when carrying out its duties toward all pupils with special educational needs and ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEND provision is being made for their child.

Partnership with parents plays a key role in enabling children and young people with SEND to achieve their potential. Pupils and parents will be encouraged to participate in all the decision-making processes and contribute to the assessment of their needs, the review and transition processes, (age appropriate).

### Identification, Assessment and Provision

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole.

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 child's previous rate of progress
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

It can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life. The first response to such progress should be high quality first teaching targeted at their areas of difficulty. Where progress continues to be less than expected the class teacher, working with the SENDCO, should assess whether the child has SEND. While informally gathering evidence (including the views of the pupil and their parents) the school should not delay in putting in place extra teaching or other rigorous interventions designed to secure better progress, where required. The pupil's response to such support can help identify their particular needs.

For some children, SEND can be identified at an early age. However, for other children and young people difficulties become evident only as they develop. All those who work with children and young people should be alert to emerging difficulties and respond early. In particular, parents know their children best and it is important that all professionals listen and understand when parents express concerns about their child's development. They should also listen to and address any concerns raised by children and young people themselves. Where there is uncertainty about an individual

child, teachers will look carefully at all aspects of a child's performance in different subjects and socially to establish whether the problems they have in the classroom are due to limitations in their command and understanding of the language or arise from special educational needs.

In order to help children who have special educational needs, the school will adopt a graduated response that recognises there is a continuum of special educational needs and brings increasing specialist expertise to bear on the difficulties that a child may be experiencing. The school will record the steps taken to meet the needs of individual children.

### **The role of the SENDCO**

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEND
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND 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 SEND
- liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, specialist advisory teachers, 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 Head-teacher 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 SEND up to date

Where a child is not making progress teachers may need to consult the SENDCO to consider what else might be done. The key test of the need for action is evidence that current rates of progress are causing concern.

### **School Support**

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEND 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 (assess, plan, do, review). 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 SEND of children and young people.

- **Assess**

In identifying a child as needing SEND support the class teacher, working with the SENDCO, should carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This should draw on the teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil, their previous progress and attainment, as well as information from the school's core approach to pupil progress, attainment, behaviour to learning and social skills. It should also draw on previous teachers' assessments where relevant, the individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data, the views and experience of parents, the pupil's own views and, if relevant, advice from external support services. Schools should take seriously any concerns raised by a parent. These should be recorded and compared to the setting's own assessment and information on how the pupil is developing. This assessment should be reviewed regularly. This will help ensure that support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed. For some types of SEND, the way in which a pupil responds to an intervention can be the most reliable method of developing a more accurate picture of need.

In some cases, outside professionals from health or social services may already be involved with the child. These professionals should liaise with the school to help inform the assessments. Where professionals are not already working with school staff the SENDCO should contact them if the parents agree.

- **Plan**

Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEND support, the parents must be formally notified, although parents should have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above. The teacher and the SENDCO should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil 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. All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil should be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This should also be recorded on the school's information system (CPOMS).

The support and intervention provided should be selected to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness, advice from professionals from outside agencies and should be provided by staff with sufficient skills and knowledge. Parents should be fully aware of the planned support and interventions and, where appropriate, plans should seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home. The information set out above should be made readily available to and discussed with the pupil's parents.

- **Do**

The class teacher should remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class teacher, they should still retain responsibility for the pupil. They should work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching. The SENDCO should support the class teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.

- **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. The impact and quality of the support and interventions should be evaluated, along with the views of the pupil and their parents. This should feed back into the analysis of the pupil's needs. The class teacher, working with the SENDCO, should revise the support in light of the pupil's progress and development, deciding on any changes to the support and outcomes in consultation with the parent and pupil. Parents should have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions provided, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.

### **Requesting an EHC needs assessment**

The majority of children with SEND will have their needs met within school. Some children with more complex needs 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. The purpose of an EHC plan is to make special educational provision to meet the special educational needs of the child, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood. EHC plans must specify the outcomes sought for the child. EHC plans should be focused on education and training, health and care outcomes that will enable children to progress in their learning and, as they get older, to be well prepared for adulthood. EHC plans can also include wider outcomes such as positive social relationships and emotional resilience and stability. Outcomes should always enable children to move towards the long-term aspirations of employment or higher education.

The child's parents have a specific right to independently ask a local authority to conduct an education, health and care needs assessment for a child.

### **Annual review of an EHC Plan**

EHC plans should be used to actively monitor children and young people's progress towards their outcomes and longer term aspirations. They must be reviewed by the local authority as a minimum every 12 months. Reviews must focus on the child or young person's progress towards achieving the outcomes specified in the EHC plan.

The review must also consider whether these outcomes and supporting targets remain appropriate. All EHC Plans must be reviewed at least annually with the parents, the pupil, the LEA, the school and professionals involved invited to consider whether any amendments need to be made to the description of the pupil's needs or to the special educational provision specified in the statement. The annual review should focus on what the child has achieved as well as on any difficulties that need to be resolved.

At the review in year 5, the aim should be to give clear recommendations as to the type of provision the child will require at the secondary stage, this should be completed by the end of February. The SENDCO of the receiving school should be invited to attend the final annual review.

Natalie Palmer

Deputy Headteacher and SENDCo

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