



St Matthew's Catholic Primary School

SEND Policy

Agreed by the Governing Body on	October 2025
Review Date	October 2026
Person Responsible	Headteacher

What is a Local Offer?

From September 2014, the Government has asked all Local Authorities (LAs) and schools in the UK to publish in one place and keep under review, information about the services and provision they expect to be available for children and young people from 0 to 25 who have Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND). As part of this commitment all schools are asked to offer details of their approach, resources and provision for children who may have an additional SEND need. This is known as the 'Local Offer'.

For further information about the Local Authority's 'Local Offer', please visit the South Tyneside website www.southtyneside.gov.uk.

The intention of the Local Offer is to improve choices for families and it will be an important resource for parents in understanding the range of services and provision available in the local area.

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to the equal inclusion of all pupils in all areas of primary school life. We recognise the diverse and individual needs of all pupils and take into account the additional support required by those children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Miss Shawcross is the Designated Teacher for Looked after Children and also the SENDCO, along with the Headteacher – Mrs Alderson, she is responsible for ensuring all teachers in school understand the implications for those children who are looked after and have SEN.

We have a designated SEND Governor, Helen Hall, who works closely with the SENDCO to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision for all children at St Matthew's. This guide aims to detail our 'Local Offer' to children and families who have an interest in, or need additional SEND provision.

If you should require any additional information, please contact Miss Shawcross or Mrs Alderson who would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

What is SEND?

Special Educational Needs and/or a disability can affect many children throughout their school career and beyond. Whilst disabilities generally affect children long term, not all SEND difficulties should be seen as life-long.

SEND is seen by our school as the child requiring provision that is additional to or different from the rest of the class. For example they may have additional needs due to coordination problems (DCD), number understanding or sensory and/or physical needs. Here at St Matthew's we understand that every child is unique and a carefully planned approach is needed. Our school recognises there are particular groups of pupils whose circumstances require additional consideration by those who work with them to support their SEND.

There are now four broad areas of SEND:

- **Communication and interaction** (SLCN, ASC) This area of need includes children with Autism Spectrum Condition and those with Speech, Language or Communication Needs.
- **Cognition and Learning** (MLD, PMLD, SLD, SpLD) This includes any children with Specific Learning Difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple learning Difficulties.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties** (SEMH) This includes any pupils who have an emotional, social or mental health need that is affecting their ability to learn.
- **Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties:** This includes children with Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Multi-sensory Impairment and physical difficulties.

Who decides if my child has SEND?

Often children may join St Matthew's with parents having a clear understanding of their child's needs and as a school, we see parents as partners in their child's educational journey. Sometimes, however, school staff may initially identify a concern. If this were the case staff would liaise with the parents at the earliest opportunity to discuss such concerns and agree 'next steps'.

For some concerns, we may discuss the involvement of specialist support, for example, Education Psychology, CYPS (Children and Young People Services), SENDIASS (support for families) or Occupational Therapy. It is important to understand that the involvement of professionals does not always seek to 'label' or 'diagnose' children but to seek advice or strategies to help them to reach their full potential.

There are two categories of SEND at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School:

- A SEND Support Plan: the school oversee children and together the school and parents initiate, review, amend and cease support for children whose needs are seen at a 'SEN Support Plan' (school) level.
- An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP): An education, health and care (EHCP) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. Children at this level have their plans initiated and ceased by the Local Authority, but reviewed and monitored by the school and parents at least annually.

What involvement can we have as parents at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School?

We value the contribution that parents can make to their child's education and both school and home must work hard at this important aspect of school life. You are always welcome to call in and see how your child is doing, so long as you let us know prior to your visit. We also expect parents to attend parent consultation sessions if your child has an additional need; this is a child centred 'Annual Review' for all pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan. For children who are in receipt of a school 'SEND Support Plan' during parent consultation sessions we will share learning targets for the following term by reviewing children's current SEND Support Plans.

How does my child contribute to SEND provision and planning?

As with everything related to your child in our school – they have an opinion and voice that is listened to. At child centred reviews (for children with statements and EHCPs) your child may be invited to the review and able to join in the discussion about how their learning is going. However, most children write their views prior to the meeting to submit their own ideas with the help of our SEND staff. Children at the Support Plan phase are actively involved in reviewing their termly targets if appropriate and have the opportunity to add their comments to the plan as it progresses. Children with an EHCP will contribute to a 'My View' with staff members / parents to ensure wishes and feelings are captured in the children's plans.

At St Matthew's we build effective relationships that with our children, which means that we have regular, conversations with our children leading to a very clear picture of what our children enjoy, what works and what they need.

Will my child sit external tests, such as SATs?

The answer to this question relates to individual children, but most children do achieve well when they have been supported effectively. If your child is able to access the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, Year 2 SATs, or Year 6 SATs, they will be supported appropriately to access these, often with access arrangements (such as extra time, a scribe, or enlarged texts). However, if your child is not able to access these assessments, due to very complex needs, they will not be expected to complete them and their achievements and progress will be measured using school data.

What about SEND and School Finances?

Each school in South Tyneside receives its school budget in April, and as part of this budget there is a 'notional' SEND amount. As such, schools are responsible for funding the first £6k of support for children with SEND – after which they can request two terms additional 'Step Up Funds' from the Local Authority; generally this is for children with very high needs and often in receipt of an EHCP.

In order to access these funds, the school produces a 'Costed Provision Map' – detailing the provision the child is receiving and at what cost to the school. Parents are involved in this process and are invited to review the plans and support timetables with school leaders. Children in receipt of an EHCP may be allocated additional funds as part of the plan. The use of these funds is discussed at the

initiation of the plan, and during the review meetings to ensure best value is achieved.

More information about SEND finances is available within the Local Authority Local Offer Website, a link to which is on our school website, under 'Local Offer'. Please see our website for more information. In South Tyneside, schools and settings use guidance called the 'SEND ranges' to make sure that every child is treated with equality and fairness.

What kind of additional provision and curriculum could you offer?

The provision offered to each child with SEND is unique. Our school challenges itself to deliver high quality provision, within an ethos of care, support and understanding for both children and families. In order to meet this challenge, our school has:

- A model of early intervention for the needs of children with Speech, Language and/or Communication Needs. The needs of the children are assessed by the South Tyneside's Speech and Language Department and intervention is planned and delivered by school staff.
- A high level of teaching support, to ensure children with additional needs are well supported in all lessons.
- A Christian and family ethos, where each child and their needs is understood by all of the school community.
- A curriculum, tailored to the needs of the child with staffing, scaffolded learning , teaching style, and resources.
- A dedicated SENDCo, who is fully committed to inclusion and high quality experiences for all children.

Some examples of additional provision, which could be suitable for a child with SEND might include:

- Some individual teaching, following dedicated programmes to address specific needs, e.g. speech and language, phonics, emotional needs.
- Small group focus work to address shared issues, e.g. fine and gross motor skills groups; speech and language groups.
- Additional resources to enable better access to the curriculum, e.g. pencil grips, writing slopes, coloured overlays etc. Professional advice taken from Educational Psychology or the Cognition and Learning team.
- Thorough assessments undertaken by school staff or professionals.
- Specialist interventions, e.g. Occupational Therapy, Emotional Resilience, School Counsellor.
- Skilled and dedicated Staff to support within the class, in order for the work to be further differentiated to meet exact/additional needs.

- Across our school, we have a variety of children with varying types and levels of need.

What additional pastoral support can you offer?

In order for children to achieve well, we have a strong focus upon pastoral care. Other than a dedicated SENDCO, knowledgeable teaching and support staff we also have:

Transition: We work closely with all local Secondary and Special Schools in order to ensure the smoothest transition possible. This includes close liaison with a SENDCOs from the relevant school and additional pupil visits to Secondary school for pupils with SEND.

Transition is also closely supported at each juncture; EYFS to Key Stage 1, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and moving from year group to year group.

If you feel that, you would like any additional support during a transition phase, please ask a member of staff.

We have:

- Close links with the St Matthew's parish and parish priest, Father Saji.
- Close links with External Partnerships; In order to access the best professional advice, we also link with Local Authority and Private Providers of additional services, such as Educational Psychology, Occupational Therapy, SALT (Speech and Language Therapy), CAHMS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service), CYPS (Children and Young People Services) School Nursing Service, Social Services and Medical Professionals.

We have suitable meeting spaces and often hold multi-professional meetings in school so that parents are comfortable in the school environment and the child can join us easily, if it is appropriate.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Support: We also offer SEMH support as a school to pupils who may need additional intervention. We have emotional regulation interventions in place for those pupils who require this and also can offer Lego Therapy groups. We also receive support from a Healthy Minds Practitioner, who can provide bespoke support for any children referred but also offers a whole school approach to supporting mental health, providing all classes with teaching on a range of SEMH issues such as worrying, body image and transition to secondary school.

How do you support children with SEND and vulnerable groups at St Matthew's? Children with additional needs, such as SEND or 'Looked After'

Children are closely monitored and supported throughout their time at our school. Our SENDCO regularly reviews the provision and achievements for our children with

SEND to ensure the best outcomes for children and families. Supporting families is a specific part of this role and also the role of all staff at all levels; we see supporting children through supporting families as a vital part of ensuring quality provision. Children who are 'Looked After' by the Local Authority (in care) are monitored and supported by the Head teacher. Provision, additional resources and teaching and outcomes are reassessed regularly to ensure that these vulnerable children are both happy and making good progress. The Head teacher also liaises with Social Services and attends all 'Looked After Reviews.'

How do we evaluate the effectiveness of our provision?

At St Matthew's we hold regular reviews of children's academic progress and attainment, as well as the outcomes of all targets set on EHC Plans and SEND Support Plans. We also carefully monitor how children achieve socially and emotionally to ensure that the holistic needs of a child are met. We invite external evaluation from the Local Authority and the Primary SENDCO's from the Bishop Chadwick Trust to review provision and we consult with children and parents on a regular basis to ensure that the needs we are constantly trying to improve.

How do you enable children with SEND to engage in activities with children without SEND?

We do our best to ensure that all children can access all things as best as we can; we do not see SEND as a barrier to accessing the full curriculum. For example, if a child had a physical disability, they can always be incorporated in to a PE lesson with adaptation and effort; we make that effort. We are prepared to seek advice, resources, equipment and training when needed in order to provide quality-learning experiences for our children.

Links to Other Policies

Please see the following policies which link to this SEND Information report:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Compliments and complaints

Should you be happy with the provision your child receives, please let the school staff know. It is nice to know that we are making children and parents happy with the support we provide! If you are unhappy, it is best to speak to Mrs Alderson and we will do our best to rectify the problem, in partnership with you and your child. There is also a copy of the school's complaints procedure on the school's website should you feel you require it.

Main points of contact:

Mrs Eve Alderson – Head Teacher 01914898355

Miss H Shawcross – SENDCo 01914898355