



SEN and Disability (Access) Policy

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St Thomas More Catholic Academy

All Saints Catholic Collegiate

United in Faith, Love and Learning

Mission Statement

At St Thomas More Catholic Academy, we are committed to ensuring that every child is valued as a unique individual created in the image and likeness of God. In keeping with our Catholic ethos and inclusive mission, we strive to ensure that all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are supported to flourish academically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

We believe that all pupils are entitled to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum and that high-quality teaching, effective pastoral care and strong partnerships with families are central to enabling pupils with SEND to achieve their full potential.

Policy Objectives

SEN is the acronym used regarding Special Educational Needs and will be used throughout this document

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:-

- SEN Code of Practice 2014
 - Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
 - Part 3 Duties on Schools
 - Information to be included in the SEN information report
 - Information to be published by a local authority in its local offer
- Children & Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Schools Admissions Code DfE 1 February 2012

This policy was developed in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Inclusive Learning Services and parents of children with special educational needs and will be reviewed annually, or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- In the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

Equality and Diversity : All policies are intended to ensure that no-one is treated in any way less favourably on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic or social origin, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age, religion / belief or political / other personal beliefs, or any protected characteristic.

This policy outlines the framework for St Thomas More Catholic Academy to meet its duty and obligation to provide a high-quality education to all of its students, including students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and to do everything it can to meet the needs of students with SEND.

The range and degree of learning difficulties, behavioural problems, physical or sensory disabilities that might be found in a typical class can be considerable, and it is recognised that this situation exists at St Thomas More Catholic Academy

The aims and objectives of the SEND Policy relate directly to those of the academy, and are also based on the values derived from and are guided by the requirements of the various Acts of Parliament and guidance published pertaining to SEND and the 2015 Code of Practice.

Through successful implementation of this policy, the academy aims to:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Promote equal opportunities.
- Foster good relationships between students with SEND and students without SEND.
- Work with the LA within the following principles which underpin this policy:
- Involve children, parents/carers and young people in decision-making
- Swiftly and correctly identify children's and young people's needs
- Collaborate with health and social care services to provide support
- Provide high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents/carers over their support
- Successfully prepare for adulthood, including independent living and employment

The Code of Practice (2015) states:

"A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her".

Definition of SEND:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which presents a barrier to learning and therefore calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions. *SEN Code of Practice (2014, p 4)*

A special educational provision is provision that is different from or additional to that normally available to students or students of the same age, which is designed to help children and young people with SEN or disabilities to access the National Curriculum at academy or to study at college.

Definition of disability:

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' *SEN Code of Practice (2014, p5)*

Policy Aims

The aims of St Thomas More Catholic Academy are:

- Ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate provision and support.
- Identify pupils with SEND as early as possible.
- Promote high aspirations and ambitious outcomes for pupils with SEND.
- Ensure pupils with SEND can access a broad and balanced curriculum.
- Ensure that pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life.
- Develop effective partnerships with parents, carers and external agencies.
- Comply with statutory duties under the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and Equality Act 2010.
- To endeavour to provide exceptional intervention to meet the needs of any student who holds an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), in collaboration with colleagues, other professionals, the young person and the parents/carers

Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure statutory SEND duties are met.
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Ensure appropriate staffing and resources are in place.
- Designate an appropriate member of staff (SENCO) as having responsibility for coordinating provision for students with SEN
- Appoint a designated teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) where appropriate
- Make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities to help alleviate any substantial disadvantage they experience because of their disability
- Publish a SEN information report on an annual basis.
- Publish annual information on the academy's SEND policy, setting out the measures and facilities to assist access for students with disabilities (SEND Local Offer; see below)
- Publish annual information about the arrangements for the admission of students with disabilities, the steps taken to prevent children with being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist students with disabilities, and the academy's accessibility plan
- Publish accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access for students with disabilities to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information, reviewable every three years

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for:

- The strategic leadership of SEND provision.
- Ensuring SEND is embedded within whole-school improvement priorities.
- Deployment of staffing and resources.
- Ensuring that the SENCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions
- Providing the SENCo with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within the Academy
- Appointing a designated teacher for looked after children, who will work closely with the SENCO to ensure that the needs of the student are fully understood by relevant academy staff

SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Day-to-day operation of SEND provision.
- Coordinating support for pupils with SEND.
- Liaising with staff, parents and external agencies.
- Maintaining the SEND register.
- Monitoring progress and provision.
- Supporting staff development and training.
- Working with the governors and the principal to ensure that the academy meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Coordinating the specific provision made to support individual children with SEND, including those who have EHCps
- Liaise with the relevant designated teacher where a LAC has SEND
- Liaising with the parents/carers of students with SEND

Class / subject teachers must:

- Plan and review support for their students with SEND, on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents/carers, the SENCo and, where appropriate, the student themselves
- Set high expectations for every student and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment
- Use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious

Involving Students and Parents/Carers in Decision Making

The school values strong partnerships with parents and carers.

Parents are supported through:

- Regular communication
- Review meetings
- Parent evenings
- SEND workshops
- Annual reviews

Pupils are actively involved in setting targets and evaluating support arrangements.

Arrangements For SEND Provision

Categories of SEND

The school provides for pupils whose needs fall within the four broad areas identified within the SEND Code of Practice:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Physical and/or Sensory Needs

This may include pupils with:

- Autism
- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs
- Physical Disabilities
- Hearing or Visual Impairment
- Moderate Learning Difficulties
- Medical Needs

SEND Provision

Provision may include:

- In-class support
- Intervention programmes
- Coaching
- SEND profiles
- Emotional wellbeing support
- Assistive technology
- Specialist external support
- Examination access arrangements

Pupils with EHCPs receive provision in line with their statutory plans.

Admissions

- The academy will ensure it meets its duties under the Academy Admissions Code by:
 - Not refusing admission for a child that has named the academy in their education, health and care (EHC) plan.
 - Considering applications from parents of children who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan.
 - Not refusing admission for a child who has SEND but does not have an EHC plan because the academy does not feel able to cater for those needs.
 - Not refusing admission for a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan.
 - Adopting fair practices and arrangements in accordance with the Academy Admissions Code for the admission of children without an EHC plan.
 - Arrangements for the fair admissions of students with SEND are outlined in the Admissions Policy and will be published on the academy website.

Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Equality Act 2010
- Equality Act 2010 (Disability) Regulations 2010
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- Children Act 1989
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Amendment) Regulations 2015
- Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (Detained Persons) Regulations 2015
- Local Government Act 1974

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- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- This policy also has due regard to statutory and non-statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - DfE (2015) 'Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years'
 - DfE (2015) 'Supporting students at academy with medical conditions'
 - DfE (2016) 'Keeping children safe in education'
 - DfE (2015) 'Working together to safeguard children'
 - DfE (2014) 'Academy admissions code'

SEND Local Offer

- Local authorities, schools and other services will set out a Local Offer of all services available to support children who are disabled or who have Special Educational Needs and their families. The local offer will enable families to understand what services they can access and what support they can expect from a range of local agencies, including from the local authority, health services, schools, leisure services and the voluntary sector. The offer will include provision from birth to 25, across education, health and social care.
- The local authority's local offer is published on:

<http://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk/kb5/stoke/directory/results.page?localofferchannel=2&qt=St+Thomas+More+Catholic+Academy&term=&sorttype=relevance>

*Parents/carers without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCo for support to gain the information they require.

Identification, Assessment and Provision of students with SEND

The school uses a graduated approach to identifying SEND.

Identification may include:

- Liaison with primary schools
- KS2 data analysis
- Baseline assessments
- Teacher referrals
- Parent concerns
- Observation
- Attendance and behaviour monitoring
- Specialist assessments
- External agency advice

The school recognises the importance of early identification and intervention.

Review of Provision:

- St Thomas More Catholic Academy monitors and tracks the progress of all students.
- Assessment data is sent home to parents/carers, detailing the students' attendance, their current working at grade across the curriculum and their target grade.
- Subject teachers are responsible for tracking the progress of students in their classes and putting into place relevant interventions.
- Heads of Department also review the progress of students in their subject areas and intervene as required.

In addition, for students with SEND:

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- The SENCo reviews the data and will initiate additional interventions and support, liaising with subject teachers.
- To monitor the progress of students, tracking records will be kept including those for reading and spelling tests. The assessments we use can be found in the appendices of the 'SEN Information Report'. By using these it will be possible to see if students are increasing their level of skills in key areas. If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made the SEN support plan will be reviewed and adjusted.
- The SENCo also meets with the Head of English and Maths on a termly basis to analyse SEN data and to network in relation to any key SEN information to ensure a unified approach.
- EHCPs are reviewed annually with staff, parents/carers, student and relevant outside agencies; meetings being convened by the Academy. The annual review in Year 9 and Year 11 is particularly significant preparing for a student's transition to employment, further education, work-based higher education and adult life. The aim of the annual review in year 9 and 11 and in subsequent years is to review the young person's EHCP and draw up a Transition Plan to Further Education.
- Intervention strategies are reviewed with staff, parents/carers, the student and relevant outside agencies at the end of each cycle.
- These reviews inform future planning.

Graduated Approach

The school follows the graduated approach of:

Assess → **Plan** → **Do** → **Review** as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice.

The academy will, once a potential SEND has been identified, employ a graduated approach to meeting the student's needs, including:

- Establishing a clear assessment of the student's needs
- Planning with the student and student's parents, the interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development and behaviour, along with a clear date for review
- Implementing the interventions, with support of the SENCO
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the interventions and making any necessary provisions

Waves of provision

There are four categories of provision within each 'wave'. These are known as 'Dimensions of Need'. Student's needs are identified under a specific 'Dimensions of Need', and support is implemented accordingly.

Cognition and Learning	Communication and Interaction
Social, Emotional And Mental Health	Sensory and Physical

Wave 1	Quality first inclusive teaching for all students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment across curriculum areas (in one or all of the four categories)
Wave 2	Short-term targeted interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted specifically at a child's identified areas of weakness SEMH are not ameliorated by the positive strategies in the classroom Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment in the classroom Has communication and / or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum in the classroom
Wave 3	Long-term support, personalised provision including involvement of any outside agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period Continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age Has ongoing SEMH difficulties which substantially and regularly interfered with the child's own learning or that of other students Has sensory or physical needs, and requires specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service Has an ongoing communication or interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning in the classroom

Transition

Transition Arrangements

The school provides enhanced transition support for pupils with SEND including:

- Additional visits
- Meetings with parents
- Liaison with primary schools
- SEND-specific induction arrangements
- Dedicated SEND coaching support

Support is also provided for:

- GCSE option transitions
- Post-16 transitions
- Mid-year admissions

Education Health Care Plans (EHCP)

- The academy will fully cooperate with the LA when research about the student is being conducted.
- If the LA decides not to issue an EHC plan, the parents/carers of the student, or the student themselves, will be informed within a maximum of 16 weeks from the initial request of an EHC assessment.
- The academy will admit any student that names the academy in an EHC plan or EHC needs assessment process.

Reviewing an EHCP

St Thomas More Catholic Academy will:

- Cooperate to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the LA if requested.
- Ensure that the appropriate people are given at least two weeks' notice of the date of the meeting.
- Contribute any relevant information and recommendations about the EHC plan to the LA, keeping parents/carers involved at all times.

Teaching Students with SEND

Quality First Teaching

High-quality adaptive teaching is the first response to SEND.

Teachers support pupils through:

- Explicit instruction
- Scaffolding
- Flexible grouping
- Use of technology
- Adaptive teaching strategies
- Retrieval and modelling approaches
- Opportunities for independent learning
- Regularly and carefully monitoring the quality of teaching for all students. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable students and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered *SEN Code of Practice (2014)*.

Curriculum and Learning Environment:

- At St Thomas More Catholic Academy we endeavour to adapt the curriculum and learning environment for students with SEND. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of all our students. The Academy incorporates both internal and external assessments and the strategies described in Education, Health and Care Plans, when planning the curriculum.

Inclusion and Accessibility

The school is committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity.

The school:

- Ensures pupils with SEND can access trips and enrichment
- Makes reasonable adjustments
- Operates an Accessibility Plan
- Promotes participation in wider school life

Emotional Wellbeing and Safeguarding

The school recognises the close relationship between SEND, wellbeing and safeguarding.

Support may involve:

- Pastoral support
- ELSA provision
- SEMH interventions
- External agencies
- Safeguarding referrals where appropriate

Working with External Agencies

The school works closely with:

- Educational Psychology
- CAMHS
- SENMAS
- Speech and Language Therapy
- SEND services
- Social Care
- Health professionals

Training and Expertise of Staff

The school is committed to ongoing professional development.

Training includes:

- Whole-school SEND training
- ECT support
- Specialist SEND training
- External agency training
- INSET provision

Complaints / SEND and Disability Tribunal

Concerns relating to SEND provision should initially be raised with the SENCO.

If concerns remain unresolved, parents should follow the school's formal complaints procedure.

- We encourage parents/carers to discuss their concerns with their child's subject teachers, Heads of Department, Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher, to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal.
- There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an EHCp where there is a statutory right for parents/carers to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the Academy.
- The academy will meet any request to attend a SEND Tribunal and explain any departure from its duties and obligations under the SEND Code of Practice.

Linked Documents

- SEND Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Safeguarding Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy