

# **St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Gateshead**

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

### **Policy and Guidelines**



## **Mission Statement**

**Work hard, love tenderly, walk humbly : trusting in Jesus.**

**Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator: Mrs N Hall**

**Designated Governor for SEND : Geoff Brown**

In line with our mission statement our Special Needs Policy is based on the Gospel Values and Christian principles that each person is uniquely important and brings the school community his/her own gifts and weaknesses. It requires all staff to work together to promote an explicitly Christian ethos where the development of the whole child is central.

Date: January 2025  
Review: January 2027

## **Vision, Values and Ethos**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to the principles of inclusion. We have a caring, supportive ethos that seeks to value all individuals. Our school promotes equality of opportunity for disabled people: pupils, staff, parents, carers and others who use our school.

By promoting a positive attitude towards disabled people, we aim to eliminate discrimination and harassment related to disability and thereby fulfil an essential component of our ethos.

We will involve disabled people in informing the direction our school takes to promote equality of opportunity and accessibility to the school environment. We also seek to encourage full participation of disabled people in the school community even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Our school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in a happy, challenging environment where each pupil can develop to the maximum of his/her potential and feel valued as an individual who can contribute to the life of our school and society in general.

## **AIMS**

At St. Joseph's Primary School, we place considerable importance on the provision of quality first teaching and learning which enables all children to gain access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum.

This policy embraces Every Child Matters and seeks to deliver its outcomes. Our aim is to ensure all children are supported as necessary in order that they may work confidently towards reaching their full potential.

Close regard is paid to the three key principles of inclusive education:

1. setting suitable learning challenges
2. responding to pupils' diverse learning needs
3. overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils.

## **To achieve our main aim it is necessary to:**

- adopt a whole school approach to the identification, assessment and provision for children with special educational needs
- view our special needs provision as an ongoing, developing process
- provide appropriate in-class support which enables all children to have access to the whole curriculum, including the National Curriculum
- provide both short term and long term interventions designed to help all children access the curriculum and make progress
- incorporate special educational needs procedures and children's individual needs into curriculum planning

- develop an effective partnership between school, parents and outside agencies
- encourage children and parents/carers to participate in decision-making about provision to meet their special educational needs
- ensure that the assessment and record-keeping system provides adequate means of recording attainment and achievement and gives sufficient information for carefully planned progression at every stage
- involve the Governing Body and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, in the regular review, development and evaluation of policy and guidelines
- ensure all those involved with children with special educational needs work as a team with the school's main aim in mind
- monitor those procedures which have been put into place to ensure children with SEN make significant progress as they move through the school

### **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

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.

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

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

### **Disabled children and young people**

Many children and young people who have SEN may 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’. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

### **Four broad areas of need**

Children experiencing difficulties in any one or a combination of these areas may be entered on the school's SEN register.

**The four broad areas of need are:**

1. communication and interaction
2. cognition and learning
3. social, emotional and mental health difficulties

#### 4. sensory and/or physical needs

##### **Communication and interaction**

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication.

Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

##### **Cognition and learning**

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation.

Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning.

This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

##### **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

##### **Sensory and/or physical needs**

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning.

Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

##### **The Governing Body**

The Governing Body, in consultation with the Head Teacher, determines the school's general policy and approach to provision for pupils with special educational needs, establishes the appropriate staffing and funding arrangements and maintains a general overview of the school's work.

The Governing Body, having regard to the Code of Practice:

- ensures appropriate provision is made for any child with SEN
- will report annually to parents on the school's policy for children with SEN
- ensures all children, including those with SEN have access to a broad, balanced and appropriately differentiated curriculum
- appoints a representative of the Governing Body, to oversee SEN provision.

### **The Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher is responsible for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including provision for special educational needs. The Head Teacher keeps the Governing Body informed of all developments with regard to SEN.

### **Admissions**

In every instance, when a parent seeks a place for a child at St. Joseph's School, the Head Teacher:

- ascertains whether or not the child is the subject of an Educational Health and Care Plan (parents are to record this information on the school's Admission Form)
- informs the parent that the child cannot be admitted to the school if it is not named in the Educational Health and Care Plan until the LA have been consulted
- informs the LA that an approach for admission has been made.

### **Admission Arrangements**

The school requests school records including National Curriculum Assessments; Child Protection file (where appropriate), and details of any SEN including pupil when a child is transferring from another school into St. Joseph's School.

### **The Role of the SENCO**

The role of the SENCO is complex and incorporates several functions:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- ensuring an appropriate budget allocation to meet SEN
- interpreting legal requirements for staff, parents and governors
- attending relevant meetings
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN including matching appropriate resources to individual needs

- monitoring the progress of children with SEN
- liaising with and advising teachers
- overseeing the records of all children with SEN
- maintenance of the SEN register
- liaising with parents of children with SEN
- delivering INSET to staff regarding SEN issues
- liaising with external agencies including the LA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services, and voluntary bodies
- overseeing the pupil profile for both children with Educational Health and Care Plans and those without.

### **Equal Opportunities**

The staff of St. Joseph's believe that all members of the school should be treated with respect; have individual, diverse needs recognised, and be given the opportunity to reach their full potential, regardless of age, ability, religion, gender or culture.

### **In Service Training**

1. The Special Educational Needs Policy and Guidelines are subject to regular whole school review and evaluation
2. The SENCO or Head Teacher attends relevant courses and ensures all staff are familiar with developments in SEN. Standards Fund allocations in respect of SEN are utilised to the full.
3. Training, for both teaching and non-teaching staff is provided as necessary and the SENCO ensures all staff are aware of training available within the LEA Continuing Professional Development Programme as well as from outside agencies.
4. Priorities for training with regard to SEN will be specified within the School Improvement Plan.
5. Governors are given the opportunity to attend professional training days including those which focus on SEN.

### **Pupil Participation**

The school actively encourages the involvement of children in their education by,

- involving the child in decision making regarding the methods by which their individual needs will be met
- discuss the purpose of assessment arrangements and individual targets with the child

- encourage the child to comment on his or her SEN provision through an appropriate medium
- aim to further develop the child's self-confidence and self-esteem.

### **Parent/Carer Participation**

The school actively encourages and recognises the rights of parents/carers in terms of their involvement in the provision for their child's special educational needs by

- involving the parent/carers in decision making regarding the methods by which their child's individual needs will be met
- invite the parent/carers to attend all review meetings
- discuss the purpose of assessment arrangements and SEN provision.
- encourage the parent/carers to be actively involved in working towards their child achieving the targets
- ensure the parent/carers is aware of their rights to appeal regarding aspects of their child's SEN provision
- aim to further develop the parent/carers' confidence in the provision made for their child's special educational needs.

### **Annual Review Procedure**

For a child who has Educational Health and Care Plan, the LA has a statutory duty to formally review his/her plan, at least annually. Annual Review Meetings are organised in school by the SENCO.

#### **The SENCO:**

- Determines who should be invited to attend each meeting (at a minimum this would include the SENCO, parent/carers, LA representative and designated medical officer)
- Seeks the views of the child and invites him/her to all or part of the meeting
- Plans Annual Review Meetings in advance and contacts professionals by letter
- Seeks written advice on the child's progress from all invited to the meeting, including the parents/carers
- Sends out formal invitations to parents/carers by letter, giving at least fourteen days notice
- Provides parents/carers with guidelines for completing an Annual Review Advice Form
- Ascertain the child's views regarding progress through an appropriate medium

- Offers to assist parents/carers and children in preparing reports for the meeting
- Advises parents/carers and children that they may bring a friend or relative to the meeting
- Co-ordinates receipt of all reports and ensures copies are circulated to each person invited to attend the review at least two weeks in advance of the meeting
- Allows the tabling of reports at the meeting where appropriate with the agreement of all persons attending the meeting.

**The review aims to:**

- assess the child's progress towards meeting the objectives within the Educational Health and Care Plan
- review the educational progress made by the child
- consider the effectiveness of the Educational Health and Care Plan in light of the child's progress
- set new targets for the coming year, or determine whether amendments to the statement are necessary
- record information which the school and other professionals can use to plan provision and support for the child.

**Statutory Annual Reviews**

Annual Review Meetings are usually held in school and are chaired by the SENCO.

The annual review is in four parts:

1. Collection and collation of information
2. Annual Review Meeting
3. Head Teacher's report of the Annual Review Meeting
4. LA review the Educational Health and Care Plan in the light of the Head Teacher's report of the review meeting report, and decides whether to amend the s Educational Health and Care Plan or cease to maintain it.

**The Annual Review Meeting**

The meeting should consider the following questions:

- What are the child's current levels of attainment in English and Maths?
- What progress has the child made towards meeting the overall objectives set out in the Educational Health and Care Plan?
- What progress has the child made over the past year, especially in relation to each SEN?

- What are the parents'/carers' views of the past year's progress?
- What are the child's views of the past year's progress?
- How successful has the child been in meeting the targets?
- Is the current provision appropriate to the child's needs?
- What targets should be set for the coming year?
- Have there been any significant changes to the child's circumstances?
- Have there been any significant changes in the child's special educational needs?
- How will the child's progress be assessed?
- Are there any particular strategies that have led to improvement?
- Are there any particular requirements to promote inclusion?
- Are any amendments to the Educational Health and Care Plan necessary?
- Should the LA recommend to cease to maintain the Educational Health and Care Plan ?
- If a parent/carer is unable to attend the review how and when will the outcome of the meeting be conveyed to them?

### **Provision**

- Classroom level
- Specialist Intervention

### **Staffing and Access to the Curriculum**

All staff in school, teaching and non-teaching, have a responsibility to ensure the quality of provision for children with special educational needs.

Teaching Assistants may be involved in:

- providing relevant support to identified pupils
- developing positive working relationships with parents and professionals
- assisting with the recording, monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress
- assisting with the identification and effective provision of appropriate resources
- attending liaison, team and service meetings and undertaking appropriate INSET
- working alongside the SENCO and teaching staff in the preparation of targets.

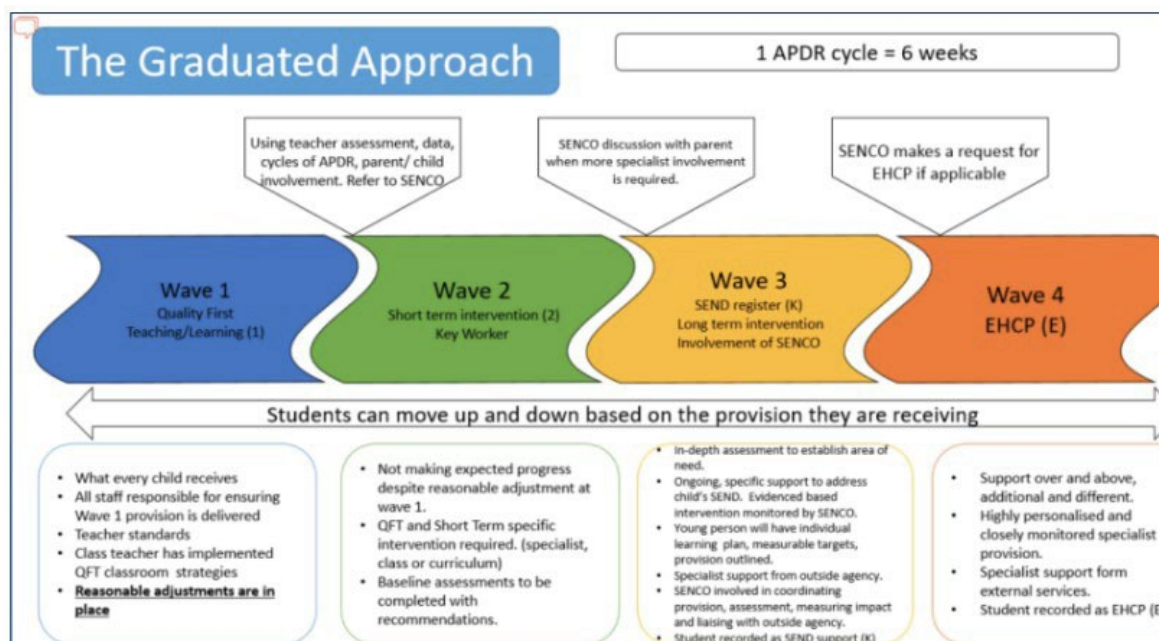
## Curriculum Planning for Special Educational Needs

Planned activities are recorded on weekly planning sheets and are derived from long term planning for children with SEN. Activities show:

- clearly defined learning outcomes
- content of the task
- continuous assessment including evaluation of lesson comments on children and implications for further action.

## Identification procedures

To assist with the early identification of pupils with special educational needs, the teacher and SENCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the school and will include early discussions with the pupil and their parents. High quality and accurate assessments will be carried out using effective tools and early assessment materials. If SEN provision be required, it will be based on the desired outcomes along with the expected progress and attainment. The views of the pupil and their parents will be included. Support in School When a pupil is identified as needing SEN support, we will take action to successfully identify and remove barriers to learning and put effective SEN provision in place. We have adopted the 4 Wave approach:



## **The SEN Register**

A list is kept of all children with special educational needs. The SENCO has responsibility for ensuring that the list and associated records are properly kept and available as needed.

## **Assessing Needs**

### **Early Years Action**

When an early education practitioner who works day-to-day with the child, or SENCO, identifies a child with special educational needs, they should devise interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the settings usual curriculum offer and strategies.

The triggers for intervention through Early Years Action could be the practitioner's or parent's/carer's concern about a child who despite receiving appropriate early education experiences:

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are particularly targeted to improve the child's identified area of weakness
- continues working at levels significantly below those expected for children of a similar age in certain areas
- presents persistent emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed in the setting
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of personal aids and equipment
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties, and requires specific individual interventions in order to access learning.

## **Outside Links and Liaison**

Gateshead LA are well equipped with a team of advisory staff who may be called upon to help. The school's educational psychologist may be involved with children with SEN. Other specialists available include:

- Language Liaison Teachers
- Early Years Liaison Teachers
- Behaviour Support Team
- Speech Therapist
- Visually Impaired Liaison Teacher
- Hearing Impaired Liaison Teacher
- Physical Difficulties Liaison Teacher / Occupational Therapist
- Area SENCO

The school values the importance of developing effective relationships with other neighbourhood schools, secondary schools and special units.

### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Review of SEN Policy and Guidelines**

This document is subject to annual review as part of the cycle of whole school self-evaluation. All staff are involved in the review, development and evaluation of the SEN policy and guidelines including the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for children with special educational needs. Its effectiveness is considered in light of the following performance indicators:

- levels of differentiation by task and by outcome reflected in weekly planning and evident in lesson observations
- measurable progress made by individual children
- monitoring reports on classroom observations prepared by Head Teacher and Deputy Headteacher
- collation of children's and parent's/carer's comments following review meetings.
- Governing body, regular meeting with link Governors and annual report.