



## **St Teresa's Catholic Academy**

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Policy**

In line with our Vision Statement, at St Teresa's we make every effort to ensure all pupils are safe, happy and successful.

This policy supports and reinforces the aims of our school, valuing all children equally and the individual gifts they and all other members of our community bring to school life at St Teresa's. We aim to love, respect, value and support everyone in our community. We aim to work and behave as well as we can and are proud of our own and others' successes.

#### **Purpose**

This document sets out how St Teresa's Catholic Academy provides support to ensure that children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can access an education which is inclusive and responsive to their individual needs. It describes our graduated response to providing support which will enable all our pupils to succeed and have high aspirations.

This document describes the national requirements introduced by **The Children and Families Act 2014** and how St Teresa's Catholic Academy will meet the requirements through the funding made available to through our budget and through other funding streams. It also sets out under what circumstances we would refer to the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

This document does not replicate the legislation or the statutory guidance. Wokingham local authority has produced detailed documents which sit alongside this policy guidance and these are referred to within the text.

#### **Background**

**The Children and Families Act 2014** sets out a new context for ensuring that children and young people who have SEND are supported to access and benefit from the range of educational opportunities that are available, so that they are enabled to have fulfilling lives as members of their community. The Act is supported by statutory guidance, '**The Code of Practice: 0 to 25' (CoP)**'. It is this guidance to which all local authorities, all publically funded early years and education settings, including academies and free schools, and a range of national and local NHS bodies must 'have regard'.

The Children and Families Act has introduced a new statutory plan called an '**Education Health and Care (EHC) plan**'. The Act also introduced a single pre statutory stage called '**SEN Support**' and this is relevant at all age levels and educational settings.

#### **The link between special educational needs and disability**

Many children and young people who have special educational needs may also have a disability. The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as '...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'. In this context 'long term' means over a year and 'substantial'

means 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes long term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cancer and sensory impairments. Many children and young people who have these medical/health conditions will not have special educational needs and their safe and full access to learning and progress will be covered by the duties set out in The Equality Act, including the requirement on all public bodies to make reasonable adjustments.

This means that, where a child or young person has a disability, the way in which their needs are met will depend on the impact the disability has on their access to education. If, with the appropriate non-discriminatory practices and reasonable adjustments, they can access education and make progress commensurate with their peers by accessing the resources 'normally available' to their educational setting, there will not be a need for them to be protected by an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC). Some of these children and young people with long term health conditions should have a Health Plan which addresses their safety, health and wellbeing whilst in the early years, school or college setting.

## **Responsibilities**

Governor for SEND  
Head teacher  
SENCO

Matthew Sullivan  
Nikki Peters  
Liz Jones

Schools and governing bodies have responsibilities to ensure that they plan on the basis that, at all times, some individuals and groups of children/young people will be experiencing difficulties with learning. At St Teresa's Catholic Academy, we follow the advice of the CoP to ensure that we follow a cycle of **'assess, plan, do, review'** which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them. This is known as the **'graduated response'**.

### **Responsibilities of School and governing body:**

- publish information on the school website about the implementation of the governing body's policy for pupils with SEN,
- identify pupils with SEND, ensure parents are informed and provision is made in line with SEN and Disability Code of Practice and comply with Children and Families Act 2014 legislation
- publish the SEND policy and the school's Local Offer (in conjunction with parents, pupils and the Local Authority) on the school website and review regularly.
- publish information on SEND funding and provision and monitor expenditure.
- appoint an SEND governor and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) (see SEN Regulations 2014),
- maintain a current record of number of pupils with SEND,
- ensure SEND provision is integrated into the school improvement plan.
- monitor progress of SEND pupils and ensure provisions specified in Statements/EHC plans are in place,
- ensure all policies take SEND into account through the Equality Impact assessments,
- keep under constant review the arrangements for pupils present and future with a disability, admit all pupils who meet admissions criteria, whether or not they have SEND.

## **Responsibilities of the SENCo:**

The legislation requires that:

- the SENCo must be a qualified teacher working at the school.
- any newly appointed SENCo must be a qualified teacher and, where they have not previously been the SENCo at that or any other relevant school for a total period of more than twelve months, they must achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment
- National Award must be a postgraduate course accredited by a recognised higher education provider.
- Schools should satisfy themselves that the chosen course will meet these outcomes and equip the SENCo to fulfil the duties outlined in this Code. Any selected course should be at least equivalent to 60 credits at postgraduate study.

Responsibility in school for:

- with the head teacher and governing body, determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school.
- day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- providing professional guidance to colleagues and working closely with staff, parents and other agencies.
- being aware of the provision in the Local Offer and working with professionals to provide a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.
- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEN
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN 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 SEN
- liaising with early years' providers, other schools, educational psychologists, 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 SEN up to date

In order to carry out these duties effectively, as a school we ensure that the SENCo has sufficient time and resources to carry out these functions. This includes 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 a school.

## **Special educational needs in St Teresa's Catholic Academy**

### **Defining SEN:**

A child or young person has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. The Code of Practice (2014) has the following definitions in paragraphs xiii to xvi

*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.*

Although the needs of children and young people often cross more than one 'area of need', the COP uses four main categories of need

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Sensory and/or physical needs

At St Teresa's Catholic Academy we ensure that we meet the needs of all our pupils through the provision we have available and the advice and support of other specialist professionals and practitioners and ensuring that we have the resources available.

### **Identifying pupils who have difficulties with learning and/or special educational needs:**

It is the responsibility of all schools to provide good teaching and holistic support for all pupils. We believe that it is particularly important that pupils who have most difficulty with their learning are taught by good quality teachers and in our school we believe that all teachers are teachers of pupils who have special educational needs.

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they achieve their best and become confident individuals living fulfilling lives.

For all pupils we carry out termly provision mapping meetings. At these meetings the Inclusion Team and class teachers consider academic progress, social and peer relationships, behaviour or any other aspects which may cause concern.

Where our assessment has identified that a pupil is experiencing difficulties we follow a cycle of '**assess, plan, do, review**' which leads to an ever increasing understanding of needs and how to address them.

This is known as the '**graduated response**' and we ensure that:

- the class teacher carries out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, supported by the school's SENCo
- the analysis includes data on progress, attainment and approaches to learning and the views of the pupil and their parent/carers and advice from any other support staff
- where behaviour is an area of concern we use a behaviour support plan.

- we plan provision which can remove the barriers to learning for the pupil using evidence based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions
- we provide support which may include differentiation, additional programmes, small group and/or individual support
- the class teacher retains the responsibility for the learning of the pupil even if the pupil is receiving support away from the rest of the class, for example, in a small group
- we review the pupil's progress and development and decide on any changes to be made in consultation with the pupil and their parent/carer
- where progress is limited we take advice from external specialists /practitioners and discuss their input, advice and support with parents and all staff involved
- where assessment indicates that specialist services are required, we make referrals promptly
- where provision does not overcome the concern and a significant and/or persistent difficulty remains apparent, a pupil will be deemed as having Special Education Needs (SEN Support category).
- at this point we draw up a provision plan each term outlining 'SEN Support' and agree a plan and outcomes with parents and the child

### **Involving parents in their child's education**

Parents are key partners in their children's education. Evidence shows that children make most progress when their key adults work together. At St Teresa's Catholic Academy, we demonstrate this by:

- always discussing any concerns we have with the pupil's parents at the earliest point
- listening, and hearing, what parents say
- identifying any outcomes to be achieved with parents
- planning any interventions with parents
- meeting with parents to review their child's interventions and progress
- being honest, open and transparent about what we can deliver
- making sure parents know who to contact if they have any concerns

Where children and young people are 'looked after' by the local authority we have an additional role as we are all corporate parents. National figures show that children who are looked after are significantly over represented at school support stages and through statutory needs assessments. In order to ensure that we are responding appropriately we:

- do not make assumptions based on a pupil's care status
- monitor the progress of all our looked after children monthly
- have an up to date Personal Education Plan which is easily understood by everyone involved
- ensure close working with the specialist services who support looked after children including the LAC nurse, social worker, Virtual Head teacher
- normalise life experience wherever possible

- ensure our looked after children, especially those with SEN are fully included in the activities available, accepting that sometimes this will mean additional arrangements to allow them to take part in activities

### **Consulting children and young people with SEN and involving them in their education**

The Children and Families Act is clear that:

- all children and young people need to be supported to develop aspirations for their future lives as active members of their community
- all children and young people have the right to have their voice heard
- involving children and young people in discussions about their learning, progress and how provision is made

At St Teresa's Catholic Academy we consult all pupils by involving them in setting academic and personal goals.

In addition, where pupils have special educational needs we ensure that:

- all pupils are encouraged and supported to make their views known. Strategies we use may include, written comments, talking to a preferred adult, friend or through drawings
- any interventions or strategies will be explained and discussed with pupils
- all pupils will be encouraged to monitor and judge their own progress in a positive and supportive environment
- reviews of progress are 'person centred' i.e. they will have the pupil, their aspirations and needs at the centre of the review reviews are always outcome focussed outcomes reflect what is important to, and for, the pupil

### **Assessing and reviewing progress**

Progress will be reviewed with the class teacher and SENCo on a termly basis. Parents and pupils will be involved in reviews and where necessary changes made to support the achievement of outcomes.

### **EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)**

The majority of children with SEN or disabilities will have their needs met within our school. However, some children may require an EHC needs assessment in order for the local authority to decide whether it needs to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan.

### **Approach to teaching children with SEN**

We believe that all children learn best with the rest of their class. Our aim is for all children to be working independently, in class, at the cusp of their potential. Children with SEN and disabilities are entitled to be taught by their teacher, not always by a TA. Teachers aim to spend time each day working with all children with SEN, individually or as part of a group. When allocating additional TA support to children, our focus is on outcomes, not hours: we aim to put in sufficient support to enable the child to reach their challenging targets, but without developing a learned dependence on an adult.

The school has a range of interventions available which are listed on a provision map. These are also described in our 'Local Offer' (see more detail below).

When considering an intervention, we look first at the child's profile of learning in order that we can select the intervention which is best matched to the child.

Targets for children at SEND are deliberately challenging in the attempt to close the attainment gap between the children and their peers. Interventions are often crucial in closing these gaps, so are monitored closely by both the class teacher- who monitors progress towards the targets during the intervention- and by the SENCo who monitors overall progress after the intervention.

### **Adaptations to the curriculum, teaching and learning environment**

St Teresa's Catholic Academy is disability friendly. The school is on two levels however; we have disabled access via a lift. We also we have a disabled toilet. We generally find that no additional adaptations to the building are necessary for children with physical disabilities.

Other adaptations to the physical environment will be made, as appropriate, to accommodate children with other sensory disabilities.

All of our classrooms are inclusion-friendly: we aim to teach in a way that will support children with tendencies towards dyslexia, dyspraxia, ASD etc. All of our children access the full National Curriculum, and we recognise achievement and expertise in all curricular areas. As part of normal class differentiation, curriculum content and ideas can be simplified and made more accessible by using visual, tactile and concrete resources.

### **Access to extra-curricular activities**

All of our children have equal access to before school, lunchtime and after school clubs which develop engagement with the wider curriculum. Where necessary, we make accommodation and adaptation to meet the physical and learning needs of our children. Class trips are part of our curriculum and we aim for all children to benefit from them. No child is excluded from a trip because of SEN, disability or medical needs.

### **Local Offer: Wokingham Local Authority**

To support children, young people and their families the Children and Families Act requires all local authorities to set out a local offer. The Local Offer is a description of support and services which are available to children and young people who have SEND, and their families, how services can be accessed and any criteria for accessing them. It is the opportunity to bring together in one place, information about provision, including how this can be accessed from a wide range of statutory and non-statutory providers including voluntary organisations. Wokingham's Local Offer can be accessed on:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/our-local-offer/>

Wokingham Local Authority has set out what it expects should be available in all mainstream settings to meet the needs of children and young people without recourse to a statutory EHC needs assessment. This document, 'SEN Support: what Wokingham expects can be reasonably provided by education settings from the funding available to them' can be found on the Local Offer page.

### **Local Offer: St Teresa's Catholic Academy**

As part of the Wokingham Local Authority Local Offer St Teresa's Academy has also written a Local Offer which describes SEND support at our school. This includes a list of interventions which is updated as required.

Our Local Offer can be accessed at:

<https://directory.wokingham.gov.uk/kb5/wokingham/directory/service.page?id=EfubWGQwMm8&familieschannel=311>

### **Working with other professionals and practitioners**

At St Teresa's Catholic Academy, we are committed to working with other professionals and practitioners to ensure that we maximise the impact of our interventions whilst minimising duplication and disruption for pupils, families and practitioners. In order to do this, we

- listen to parents to ensure we know which services they use and are valued by them
- ensure that we contact all practitioners working with our pupils to invite them to relevant meetings and reviews
- use person centred approaches with all our pupils who have SEN to ensure that interventions are coordinated and so add extra value
- value the contribution of all
- engage with local authority services in a timely and professional way
- we meet with speech and language therapist to discuss the needs of our pupils
- we meet with our educational psychologist and children's services each term to plan for the needs of individual pupils, staff training and effectively tailoring our provision

### **Preparing for transition**

Transition is ever present in our planning for pupils as we are constantly aware of the skills pupils will need in order to access the next part of their learning. When that learning is to take place in a new setting or phase, transition planning for this is a key task. We help to prepare all pupils for the next stage in their learning by arranging visits to their next setting to familiarise them with a new environment and to meet with key members of staff (class teachers, Head of Year).

For pupils with special educational needs we will arrange:

- Additional meetings for the parents and child with the new teacher
- Additional visits to the classroom environment
- Opportunities to take photographs of key people and places in order to make a transition booklet
- Transition reviews for Year 6 pupils are held, where possible, in the summer term of Year 5 or the autumn term of Year 6. Additional transition arrangements may be made at these reviews e.g. extra visits, travel arrangements, training etc

### **Staff Expertise**

Our teachers have a breadth of experience when teaching children with SEN. Teachers have access to training through Wokingham School Hub and can access training provided in groups or bespoke training from Wokingham's Educational Psychology Service. We meet with our EP to plan our training needs on a termly basis. Through our school cluster group, we can identify training needs and plan training in a cost effective way as well as using our cluster meetings as a professional forum to share expertise across schools.



Our SENCo has undertaken the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination (post graduate course).

### **Social and emotional development of our pupils**

The well being of all our pupils is our primary concern at St Teresa's. They are supported with their social and emotional development throughout the school day, through the curriculum and explicitly through our distinctive ethos and values.

Members of staff and the inclusion team are readily available for pupils and parents who wish to discuss issues and concerns. As part of our review process for children with SEN support plans or EHC Plans we will discuss their views and concerns.

The school offers pastoral support for pupils encountering emotional difficulties. This may include nurture groups, social communication groups, one to one support, special arrangements for playtimes, time out cards, feelings charts or referral to external agencies.

The well being of our pupils is supported by a Behaviour Policy, which includes guidance on expectations, rewards and sanctions.

We regularly monitor attendance, supporting pupils returning to school after absence with the aim of avoiding long-term absence.

### **Arrangements for handling complaints about SEN provision**

We know that all parents want the best for their child and we will always seek to resolve any concerns quickly. Where parents have a concern about the provision being made initially they should contact Liz Jones, SENCO. If this does not resolve the situation they should contact Nikki Peters, Head teacher.

### **Associated Policies**

- Supporting pupils with medical conditions in school
- Equality
- Safeguarding
- Teaching and learning
- Assessment
- Behaviour