

St Matthew Academy

Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

St Matthew says '*let your light shine.*'

At St Matthew Academy, we let our light shine by:

- Growing our inclusive, caring Catholic community
- Nurturing faith, discovering talents and cultivating ambition
- Transforming each other through integrity, courage and service

Enabling everyone at St Matthew Academy to flourish.

Date of Approval	Spring 2023
Date of Review	Spring 2024

May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth.
Psalm 67:4

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Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

The Academy uses the term 'parents' to signify parents and/or carers, i.e. all those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person.

Scope of Policy

This policy applies to pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND), their parents and all staff. This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Policy
- Admissions Arrangements
- Medical Needs Policy

Our SEND policy aims to set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Definition of SEND

A child or young person has SEND 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, or*
- *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions*

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools and mainstream post-16 institutions or by relevant early years providers.

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015

Disabled Pupils

Many children and young people who have SEND 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'.

There is a significant overlap between disabled young people and those with special educational needs. Where a young person requires special educational provision over and above the adjustments, aids and services required by the Equality Act 2010 they will be additionally covered by the SEN definition.

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Key Requirements/ Legal Duties

This policy responds to the requirements and recommendations of:

- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets and Direct Payments) Regulations, Section 49
- The Order setting out transitional arrangements, Section 137
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021

Core Principles

St Matthew Academy fully endorses the SEND Code of Practice (2015) core principles:

- *All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they*
- *achieve their best*
- *become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and*
- *make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training*

Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years 2015

The Academy is fully committed to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) providing that the Academy is compatible for the child's age, ability and aptitude and that their attendance is not incompatible with the efficient education of other pupils in the Academy and is an efficient use of the Local Authority's resources.

In keeping with the Academy's equality principles, we affirm that:

- All learners are of equal value
- We recognise, respect and value difference and understand that diversity is strength
- We foster positive attitudes and relationships
- We foster a shared sense of cohesion and belonging
- We have the highest expectations of all our pupils
- We work to raise standards for all pupils, but especially for the most vulnerable
- We observe good equalities practice for our staff

All areas of the building are fully accessible for people with disabilities or limited mobility.

Objectives of This Policy

- To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
- To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2015
- To operate a 'whole pupil, whole school' approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs
- To ensure access to the curriculum for all pupils
- To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils who have special educational needs
- To develop and maintain partnership and high levels of engagement with parents

Partnership with Families

The Academy works in partnership with parents. This will enable pupils with SEND to achieve good outcomes. The Academy recognises that parents have a unique overview of their child's needs and how best to support them, and that this gives them a key role in the partnership.

We have high aspirations for all our pupils, including those with SEND. In keeping with the principles of Person Centred Planning*, pupils with SEND are integral to the decision-making processes affecting them, in an age appropriate way.

** Person Centred Planning is a process for continual listening and learning, focusing on what is important to someone now and in the future, and acting upon this in alliance with their family and friends*

Identifying and Assessing Pupils with SEND

The Academy has a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND. All teachers at St Matthew Academy are responsible for identifying pupils with SEND and, in collaboration with either the Primary or Secondary Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage.

On entry to the Academy, every pupil's current level of development and/or attainment is assessed in order to ensure continuity of learning. This may flag up pupils who require additional class based interventions and/or further assessment.

The Academy regularly gathers information about every pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. Attainment and progress data is updated at least three times a year and shared with parents and pupils (in an age appropriate way). Progress is the crucial factor in determining the need for additional support. Less than expected progress might be:

- Significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Failing to match or better the pupil's previous rate of progress
- Failing to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widening the attainment gap

This can include progress in areas other than attainment – for instance, where a pupil needs to make additional progress with language, communication and social skills. Pupils may also be identified via tracking meetings where attendance and behaviour data are also considered.

Where teachers decide that a pupil is making less than expected progress despite verified high quality, differentiated teaching, they will consult parents and carry out further class based assessments. A period of additional class-based intervention will then follow. If, despite class teacher intervention, the pupil continues to make less than expected progress, either the Primary or Secondary SENCo is consulted.

The relevant SENCo is then responsible for investigating and where necessary assessing the pupil to determine if the pupil has special educational needs, noting areas that are barriers to learning which may require support.

The identification and assessment of SEND includes an early discussion with parents and the pupil (relative to their level of maturity). These early discussions with parents and pupils enable Academy staff to develop a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents' concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the pupil and the next steps.

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We expect pupils and parents to participate as fully as possible in the assessment, planning and reviewing process. With parental agreement, the Academy will liaise with outside professionals if they are already involved with the pupil. For higher levels of need, the SENCO will draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

The SEND Code of Practice 2015 does not assume that there are hard and fast categories of SEND. It recognises that children's needs and requirements fall into four broad areas:

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

In line with the SEND Code of Practice we accept that pupils often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time.

We acknowledge that while considering the needs of the whole child, some areas, which are not SEND, may impact on progress and attainment:

- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- Being in receipt of pupil premium
- Being a looked after child

N.B Behaviour is not a special educational need in itself. In keeping with the SEND Code of Practice, poor behaviour is viewed as a response to an underlying unmet need which the Academy, in partnership with parents and the child or young person, will endeavour to identify.

The Graduated Approach to Meeting Special Educational Needs

High Quality Teaching

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. High quality teaching of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is a whole school responsibility.

We understand that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.

All St Matthew Academy pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, with targets that are deliberately ambitious.

In the Secondary Phase the Academy sets pupils by ability, to ensure that less able pupils are taught in smaller classes with increased adult support. This allows the curriculum to be personalised according to their needs.

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The Academy regularly reviews the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. In addition, the SENCOs carry out regular learning walks to ensure that high quality teaching for SEND pupils is in place across the curriculum.

Teachers are able to access detailed advice on all pupils with SEND via the SENCOs. There is regular advice and training delivered by the SENCOs for colleagues at all levels. The aim of this advice and training is to improve teachers' understanding of the areas of SEND most frequently encountered and to develop their skills in identifying pupils with particular barriers to learning. Where necessary outside agencies deliver bespoke training. Staff are able to observe outstanding teaching of pupils with SEND as part of normal staff development opportunities.

Increased Levels of Provision and Support

However, in spite of high quality, differentiated teaching, it may become evident that some pupils need increased levels of provision and support.

In consultation with parents and their child, the desired outcomes, including expected progress and attainment, are agreed. A decision is then made as to whether this can be provided by adapting the Academy's core offer or whether something different or additional is required.

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil are made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. This will be recorded on the Academy's information system (SIMS).

Where it is decided that a pupil has a special educational need and/or disability (SEND), this decision is recorded in the Academy records and the parents are informed. A clear date for reviewing progress is agreed, with clear actions set out for the parent, pupil and teaching staff.

Class and subject teachers remain responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the subject teacher, they will retain responsibility for the pupil. Teachers are expected to 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 SENCOs will support class and subject teachers in the further assessment of the pupil'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 are reviewed in line with the agreed date, as part of the normal cycle of discussions with parents of all pupils. The views of the pupil and their parents are integral to this process.

The SENCOs working with class or subject teachers, may 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. A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion will be kept and shared with appropriate Academy staff. The record will be given to the pupil's parents. The Academy's management information system (SIMS) will be updated as appropriate. If a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite support and intervention, the Academy may involve specialists, both in-house and from outside agencies. The Academy will provide an annual report for parents on their child's progress, as part of the normal reporting process.

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For those pupils with the highest level of need it may be appropriate for the SENCO to request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment. Parents and their children are strongly encouraged and supported to be active participants in this process, at a level commensurate with their age and stage of development. We have an expectation that parents and the young person are fully included in the EHC assessment process from the start, are fully aware of their opportunities to offer views and information, and are consulted about the content of the plan.

As part of the EHC assessment the Academy may request additional top-up funding from the Local Authority, if it is felt that the cost of the special educational provision required to meet the needs of an individual pupil exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold.

St Matthew Academy's Provision for Pupils with SEND

The Academy's notional SEND budget is used to commission a range of services to support pupils:

Intervention	Details	Target pupils
Inclusive classroom strategies	Teachers across the academy implement and use the training and resources given to them in order to include all pupils in classroom learning. This may involve using dyslexia friendly strategies such as coloured backgrounds, particular fonts, visual aids. Other strategies and resources are used such as access to ICT, writing frames, word banks, concrete maths supports.	These strategies benefit all learners and are particularly aimed at enabling pupils with SEND to successfully access mainstream teaching and learning.
In class support from a Teaching Assistant	Support the personalisation of lessons. Ensure that target pupils meet their lesson objectives. Support class teachers to make progress with all pupils, in particular those with SEND.	Those with a statement of SEND or EHC plan, where it is necessary in order to meet objectives. Other pupils with SEND who require additional staff support to meet lesson objectives.
Speech and Language Therapy	Speech and language therapists or specially trained Teaching Assistants carry out assessments, design programmes of intervention, deliver interventions, review progress and train staff.	Pupils who are unable to thrive in all areas of the curriculum due to specific speech, language and communication needs. Pupils who have a significant gap in their understanding, receptive or expressive language. Pupils who have social communication difficulties and/or pupils with a speech impairment.
Literacy interventions	We run a wide range of literacy interventions aimed at pupils (Early Years to KS4) with significant reading, writing and comprehension difficulties. Progress is very closely monitored through regular assessments.	Each intervention has its own entry criteria based on the assessment of reading, spelling, academic progress data, and specialist literacy assessments.
Numeracy interventions	We run a wide range of numeracy interventions aimed at pupils (Early Years to KS4) with numeracy difficulties. Progress is very closely monitored through regular assessments.	Pupils who have significant gaps in their learning, applying and understanding of numeracy.

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ASD friendly intervention	A range of age appropriate group and individual work run by ASD specialists, or specially trained teaching assistants.	For pupils with a diagnosis of ASD who need support in developing their social communication, social imagination and understanding of language. Pupils may need support in understanding and regulating their sensory needs.
Motor skill and sensory support programmes	This may involve handwriting programmes, gross or fine motor skill interventions, sensory diets or the use of specialist resources such as writing wedges, move n sit cushions, pencil grips, or touch-type programmes.	For pupils with physical or sensory needs that effect their fine motor skills, gross motor skills or their sensory processing and where these difficulties present a barrier to learning.
Year 7 Transition class	Small group size One or more teaching assistants are allocated to the class. The aim is to reintegrate as many as possible into the mainstream, as soon as possible.	Pupils entering Secondary Phase with the highest level of need who may be working significantly below age related expectations in core subjects and who have other complex needs.
Counselling	Individual sessions run by a trained therapist.	Secondary pupils whose behaviour or emotional difficulties present a barrier to learning.
Alternative provision	Specialist off site provision for pupils with marked emotional and behavioural difficulties. Short and long term placements.	Pupils with a high level of need, in the areas of behaviour, social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

The above provisions are reviewed regularly by the SENCOs to establish whether they are contributing significantly to pupil progress and offer value for money.

The SENCOs are responsible for maintaining an individual provision map for each pupil with SEND. This clearly outlines the support put in place which is additional to or different from that which is offered through the Academy's curriculum. It demonstrates how any additional funding is used.

The provision map also helps the Academy maintain an overview of the programmes and interventions used with different groups of pupils, provides a basis for monitoring the levels of intervention, and demonstrates how the additional funding is used.

St Matthew Academy works closely with the Local Authority in the development and review of the Local Offer, outlining provision available to meet the range of special educational needs and disabilities. This Local Offer is published on Lewisham Council's website. The Academy's offer is published on the Academy's website under the SEN Information Report.

Transition to Further Education, Employment and Training

We place pupils and their families at the centre of planning for future transitions.

From Year 9, young people with SEND have regular meetings with our dedicated careers advisor. This review explores the young person's aspirations and abilities, what they would like to be able to do when they leave education or training and the support they need to achieve their ambition. EHC reviews have agreed, clear outcomes, which are ambitious and stretching and will prepare our pupils for adulthood.

St Matthew Academy has developed close links with FE providers, such as Christ the King Academy, LESOCO (Lewisham and Southwark College) and Shooter's Hill Campus.

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As apprenticeships develop, we are increasingly able to support pupils in successfully applying for appropriate apprenticeships.

Pupils with SEND and Bullying

Our Equality Policy makes it clear that all our pupils have the right to feel safe from bullying. We have a robust and consistent approach to bullying, which makes it clear that bullying will not be tolerated. Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying and harassment and so particular care is taken to ensure that they feel supported and that any incidents are dealt with promptly.

Pupils with SEND and Exclusions

When considering whether to exclude a pupil with SEND, St Matthew Academy pays due regard to Government guidance issued in June 2012 which states that schools should try every practicable means to maintain a pupil with SEND in school and should seek local authority and other professional advice as appropriate.

The Role of the SENCO

The SENCOs (working in either the Primary or the Secondary sector) play a crucial role in the Academy's SEND provision.

Their responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy
- Co-ordinating the provision for pupils with send
- Liaising with and giving advice to staff
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing send support
- Delivering high quality training to staff
- Ensuring that the academy keeps the records of all pupils with send up to date
- Liaising with pupils with send and their parents
- Liaising with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after pupil has send
- Liaising with external agencies
- Liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned organising access arrangements for public examinations
- Tracking send pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that the gap between send and non-send continues to reduce
- Advising on the deployment of the academy's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Leading on the department's improvement planning
- Working with the head of school and academy governors to ensure that the academy meets its responsibilities under the equality act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements

The Role of the Governing Body

The designated governors for SEND and Inclusion is Christopher Cava.

The Governing Body's responsibilities to pupils with SEND include:

- having a designated governor to oversee SEND within the Academy

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- Annually update the SEN information report on the Academy's website
- Ensuring that provision of a high standard is made for pupils with SEND
- Ensuring that pupils with SEND are fully involved in Academy activities
- Having regard to the Code of Practice 2015 when carrying out these responsibilities
- Being fully involved in developing and subsequently reviewing the SEND Policy

Complaints Procedure

The Academy's complaints procedure is outlined in the prospectus and can be found on the Academy's website.

Publishing Information: SEND Information Report

St Matthew Academy's governing body will publish information on the Academy's website about the implementation of the policy for pupils with SEND. The information will be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year will be updated as soon as possible.

The information will include:

- The kinds of special educational needs that are provided for
- Policies for identifying children and young people with send and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the senco
- Arrangements for consulting parents of children with send and involving them in their child's education
- Arrangements for consulting young people with send and involving them in their education
- Arrangements for assessing and reviewing pupil's progress towards outcomes, including the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review
- Arrangements for supporting pupils in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood
- The approach to teaching pupils with send
- How adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with send
- The expertise and training of staff to support pupils with send, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for pupils with send
- How pupils with send are enabled to engage in activities available with pupils in the academy who do not have send
- Support for improving emotional and social development including extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of pupils with send and measures to prevent bullying
- How the academy involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting pupil's send and supporting their families
- The above information will include arrangements for supporting children and young people who are looked after by the local authority and have send
- Information on the academy's send policy
- Named contacts within the academy for situations where pupils or parents have concerns
- Arrangements for handling complaints from parents of pupils with send about the provision made at the academy
- Details of the academy's contribution to the local offer, including information on where the local authority's local offer is published