

FOUNDED 1789



'Learning for life with God as our guide'

St Mary's CEP (VA) School, Dover

Special Educational Needs & Disability Policy

Date: November 2025

Reviewed and Ratified by: Governing body on 18th December 2025

Review Date: November 2026

Signed: _____ Rev'd Melissa Carter, Chair of Governors

Signed: _____ Helen Comfort, Executive Headteacher

At St Mary's CEP Primary School, we are proud of our high expectations, we believe that supporting children successfully for transition to each stage of education and adulthood is a priority. We set high aspirations preparing all our young people for life beyond school. We aim to create an environment which supports all pupils working towards becoming resilient and independent learners, whilst at the same time recognising and responding to any identified additional need.

The school aims to ensure that all the children develop spiritually, socially, physically and academically to the very limit of their potential regardless of nationality, race, gender, class, wealth or intellectual capacity.

We encourage each child to reach his/her full potential within the context of a broad and balanced curriculum which is available to all pupils and is both inclusive and differentiated. Where a need is identified, the school will put appropriate evidence-based interventions in place. These should be provided as part of a graduated approach, which includes regular review of the progress made and adaptations to the support provided as required. Plans for the use of support will relate to a clear set of expected outcomes, which include relevant, challenging, developmental targets. In school, support will be planned and reviewed by the class teacher, in collaboration with parents, SENCO, and, where appropriate, the pupil themselves.

The focus will be on the impact and outcome for the child, not just the provision provided. We want all children to value themselves, to recognise their qualities and use their abilities to make a positive impact on their learning and development as thoughtful, caring people with a mutual respect and tolerance of others.

The policy complies with Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014. It is written with reference to inclusive education under:

- Articles 7 and 24 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (June 2014)
- School Admissions Code of Practice
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 (linked to clause 64)
- Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (2014)
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (April 2014, updated 2017)
- The National Curriculum in England framework document (September 2013)
- Safeguarding Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Teachers Standards 2012

This policy should be read in conjunction with our whole school policies, which are available and listed on our school [website](#).

This policy was developed with representatives from the governing body, teachers, teaching assistants and parents of children with special educational needs and will be reviewed annually.

Definition of SEN

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 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)*

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)*

1 The kinds of special educational need for which provision is made at the school

At St Mary’s CEP we can make provision for most frequently occurring special educational needs for instance: dyslexia (persistent low levels of Literacy skills), developmental co-ordination disorders, speech and language needs, ASC, ADHD, specific learning difficulties and social, emotional, mental health needs (SEMH).

There are other kinds of special educational needs which do not occur as frequently and with which the school is less familiar. In the instance of more complex needs, we work with the Local Authority and lead professionals, to ensure that we can meet the needs of every pupil who wishes to attend our school.

Decisions on the admission of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan are made with the Local Authority.

The admission arrangements for pupils without an Education Health Care Plan do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs.

2 Information about the school's policies for making provision for pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have EHC Plans, including

Every pupil in the school has their progress tracked regularly through the year. In addition to this, pupils with special educational needs may have more frequent assessments of reading age, spelling age etc.

If these assessments do not show adequate progress is being made the SEN support plan will be reviewed and adjusted.

The *SEN Code of Practice (2014, 6.17)* describes inadequate progress thus:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between rate of progress
- Widens the attainment gap

Senior leadership rigorously monitor the progress and attainment of cohorts including those pupils identified as having SEND. Termly pupil progress meetings are held to inform all professionals working with your child of individual progress, any emerging needs and learning.

Provision maps are provided by the class teacher for each of their cohorts documenting the universal offer their class has and unique provision arrangements. These are closely monitored by our SENCO.

Interventions are closely monitored across the whole school, ensuring that high quality learning opportunities are maximised and have a positive impact.

At St Mary's CEP, we follow the advice in the [Mainstream Core Standards](#) on how to adapt the curriculum and the learning environment for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, both internal and external, and the strategies described in Education Health Care Plans.

The school recognises that other factors may influence a child's progress and attainment, but this does not necessarily mean that the child has a special educational need or disability.

Contributing factors of lower attainment could be:

- a disability, where reasonable adjustment under the Disability Equality legislation can enable a child to make normal progress
- attendance
- health and welfare
- English as an additional language
- being in receipt of Pupil Premium grant
- being a looked after child
- being a child of Service Personnel

As part of our budget we receive 'notional SEN funding'. This funding is used to ensure that the quality of teaching is good in the school and that there are sufficient resources to deploy additional and different teaching for pupils requiring SEN support. The amount of support required for each pupil to make good progress will be different in each case. Specific interventions are identified on class intervention timetables and personalised plans. In very few cases a very high level of resource is required. The funding arrangements require schools to provide up to £6000 per year of resource for pupils with an EHCP. The school can apply to the local authority for additional top up funding by making an application for additional funding for a pupil with an EHCP.

All clubs, trips and activities offered to pupils at St Mary's CEP are available to pupils with special educational needs either with or without an Education Health Care Plan. Where it is necessary, the school will use the resources available to it to provide additional adult support to enable the safe participation of the pupil in the activity, through individual risk assessment if necessary.

At St Mary's CEP we understand that an important feature of the school is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching for instance e.g. PSHE, circle time and indirectly with every conversation adults have with pupils throughout the day.

Sometimes children present with challenging behaviour. This is not necessarily because they have a special educational need or disability but should be seen as a form of communication that needs to be addressed. We have systems in place to unpick this:

- positive Behaviour Policy with clear consistent sanctions in place, with a focus on praise and reward
- regular contact with parents, for example through reward charts
- PSHE sessions, as part of the National Curriculum
- additional PSHE sessions/social skills groups to deal with specific problems as they arise
- buddy systems
- counselling sessions (via direct referral to Kent School Health)

- referral to outside agencies
- use of Communities of Schools meetings

Where there are concerns there may be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors, such as any undiagnosed communication or learning difficulties. If any mental health issues are suspected, a referral to CAMHS is considered.

3 The name and contact details of the SEN Co-ordinator

The SENCO at St Mary's CEP is Mrs Charlotte Burkett, who is a qualified teacher and in role since September 2023.

Charlotte Burkett is available on 01304 206887 or senco@stmarysprimary.net

The Role of the SENCO

The SENCO is responsible for:

- overseeing the day to day operation of the school's SEND policy
- co-ordinating provision and resources for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- liaising with and advising fellow teachers
- contributing to the in-service training of staff
- keeping and overseeing the records of all children with special educational needs
- liaising with parents of children with special educational needs
- liaising with external agencies including the LA's support and educational psychology services, health and social services and voluntary bodies
- ensuring annual reviews and appropriate documentation is completed
- organising and participate in multi-agency meetings with parents and external agencies
- liaising with and providing SEND records to receiving schools upon school transfer to ensure smooth transition
- liaising with early years settings when receiving a child with special educational needs into the school
- working with the Executive Head Teacher, Headteacher and school governors to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- removing barriers for learning

Objectives of the SENCO:

1. To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.
2. To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs or disabilities so that they can achieve their best, becoming 'confident individuals living fulfilling lives' (SEND Code of Practice, June 2014).

3. To research, identify and provide relevant resources and interventions to increase curriculum access.
4. To liaise fully with any relevant outside agencies to ensure a holistic, coordinated approach.
5. To operate a “whole pupil, whole school” approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs and disabilities through high quality teaching, often referred to as Quality First Teaching (QFT).
6. To implement the SEND Policy.
7. To provide support, advice and training for all staff working with pupils who have special educational needs.
8. To establish an agreed range of practices in relation to the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs.
9. To ensure that children with SEND take part in all the activities of the school, together with children who do not have SEND, as far as possible.

4 Information about the expertise and training of staff in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and how specialist expertise will be secured

We actively engage in SEND specific continuous professional development and our staff frequently attend networking events with SEND. We are a team of dedicated and passionate staff.

Our teachers and teaching assistants have awareness training in SEND teaching strategies, neurodiversity and specific programmes of support. Additional members of staff complete specialised professional training to support the needs of our pupils who present with exceptional needs.

Where a training need is identified beyond this we are able to access a wide range of specialist training for example from: Elms school, Aspen 1 and 2, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapist, dyslexia specialists, Virtual Schools Kent (VSK), Specialist Teaching and Learning Services (STLS) etc. The cost of training is covered by the notional SEN funding.

5 Information about assessment and identification of needs

At St Mary’s CEP we acknowledge that parents are key in identifying the needs of their children. We also recognise the importance of early identification and aim to identify children’s special needs or disability as early as possible.

Before special educational provision is made, the SENCO and class teacher will consider all the information available, within the school, about the pupil’s progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. Parents and pupils will be consulted, in conjunction with school criterion referenced assessments and

checklists. The skills and levels of attainment of all pupils are assessed on entry, building on information from their previous setting. The purpose of identification is to decide what action the school needs to take. As part of this process the needs of the whole child will be considered, not just the special educational needs or disability of the child/young person.

We recognise that all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs therefore educating such children is a whole school responsibility. This starts with high quality teaching which is adapted and personalised, being available to all.

If after monitoring and information gathering we identify your child's needs we will follow a rigorous cycle of assess, plan, do and review, referred to as *the Graduated Approach*.

<i>Part of the graduated response</i>	<i>What happens</i>
1. Assess	The SENCO and teachers will look into the barriers and difficulties your child is experiencing in school. This may involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looking at work and reports • observing your child in lessons or during break and play times and carrying out assessments • discussions with you and previous settings • seeking specialist assessment
2. Plan	Working with you, the SENCO will plan the support they will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put in place to help your child • agree the targets for your child's learning or development • decide when the plan will be looked at again to see if it's working.
3. Do	The plan is put in place.
4. Review	How has the support worked and what should we do now? This cycle is repeated 3 times over the course of the academic year. The provision and needs may change over time, as an understanding of what works well for your child develops.

**diagram adapted from KCC Send Support in Schools 2023*

If you're concerned about your child's progress, you should talk to their teacher in the first instance. If concerns persist or you have further questions about support, please

contact the SENCO. They'll discuss with you whether your child falls into one of the four broad areas of need:

1. communication and interaction
2. cognition and learning
3. social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. sensory or physical needs.

We will at times seek support from specialist services including:

- Educational Psychologist
- SEN Inclusion Advisers (SEN IA)
- Specialist Teaching and Learning Services

St Mary's CEP will use our best endeavours to support your child in our provision, this support may include:

- additional support from a teacher or teaching assistant
- special classroom materials and equipment
- observations throughout the day
- support to overcome challenges by finding different ways to engage
- improving access arrangements to the environment
- improving access to the curriculum
- adapting teaching and learning materials
- modifications to assessments and curriculum
- support with personal care like eating and dressing
- signposting to other professionals
- SEMH support

There is an expectation that all pupils have access to a universal offer of provision as detailed in Kent's [Mainstream Core Standards](#).

At St Mary's CEP we monitor the academic progress of all pupils regularly through the year. We use a range of screeners, formal assessments and professional judgements e.g. Y1 phonics screening, Speech Link, Language Link, Accelerated Reader, SFA assessments for phonics, and cognitive ability tests.

Pupils are required to participate in all [Statutory assessments](#), unless exempt. Where access and modifications are needed the SENCO will seek to ensure adaptations or special requirements are in place. Our pupils currently participate in the non-statutory KS1 assessments.

We use the tracking system '21 Steps' for reading, writing and mathematics to provide a framework for both planning and assessment. Class teachers assess pupils each term. The 21 Steps are based on the end of year expectations for each year group published within the National Curriculum. The expectation within this framework is that each pupil makes three steps progress during the academic year.

It is expected that children will move through the steps during the year and so meet the end of year expectation at the end of the year.

For pupils who are working below the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), they are formally assessed using the Portage checklist. This is used to generate an understanding of strengths and weaknesses, and can be used to track progress over time.

Other screeners are accessible to the school and assist in the early identification of specific learning needs or barriers to learning e.g. Boxhall profiling for SEMH needs and The AET Autism Progression Framework.

6 Supporting children with medical needs

Some pupils with special educational needs may have an Education Health Care Plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision.

Some pupils will have a health care plan for their specific medical needs. These are reviewed annually alongside their NHS professional. Pupils at school with medical conditions will be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Where there are children with disabilities, the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils with medical conditions are supported at school and parents and pupils have confidence in the school's ability to provide effective support for individual medical conditions in school.

School leaders will ensure that health and social care professionals, pupils and parents are consulted to guarantee that the needs of children with medical conditions are met effectively. Staff will be properly trained to provide the support that individual pupils need. A range of staff are first aid trained, these members of staff are clearly identifiable to pupils and visitors. When required, further training has been and can be undertaken for specific medical needs.

7 Information about how equipment and facilities to support children and young people with special educational needs will be secured

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will endeavour to purchase it using the notional SEN funding, or apply for high needs funding. For highly specialist communication equipment the school will seek the advice of the KCC Communication and Assistive Technology team.

8 The arrangements for consulting parents of children with special educational needs about, and involving them in, their education

All parents of pupils at St Mary's CEP are invited to discuss the progress of their children on at least three occasions a year and they will receive a written report once a year. In addition, we are happy to arrange meetings outside these times.

As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a special educational need. All such provision will be recorded, tracked and evaluated on intervention trackers and personalised plans.

If following this normal provision, improvement in progress is not seen, we will contact parents to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. From this point onwards the pupil will be identified as having special educational needs because special educational provision is being made. Parents will be invited to attend meetings three times a year to discuss progress and they receive a copy of the child's updated plan.

When a child makes consistent progress over two reviews and their individual targets have been met, a decision may be made after discussion with parents and any outside agencies, to exit them from the SEND Register. They may still take place in future interventions or still access a social skills group, for example, and any intervention will be logged on the class provision map. Their progress will, of course, continue to be monitored.

In addition to this, parents of pupils with an Education Health Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil. Information will be made accessible for parents.

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning. Parents are likely to play a more significant role in the childhood years with the young person taking more responsibility and acting with greater independence in later years.

9 The arrangements made by the governing body relating to the treatment of complaints from parents of pupils with special educational needs concerning the provision made at the school

The normal arrangements for the treatment of complaints at St Mary's CEP are used for complaints about provision made for special educational needs. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with the child's class teacher, SENCO/

Headteacher, Family Liaison Officer or Executive Headteacher to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the Chair of the Governing Body.

If the complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body, then a disagreement resolution service or mediation service can be contracted. If it remains unresolved after this, the complainant can appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), if the case refers to disability discrimination, or to the Secretary of State for all other cases.

There are some circumstances, usually for children who have an Educational Health Care Plan where there is a statutory right for parents to appeal against a decision of the Local Authority. Complaints which fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.

10 How the governing body involves other bodies, including health and social services bodies, local authority support services and voluntary organisations, in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and in supporting the families of such pupils

The designated SEN governor (Bernie Mayall) is responsible for liaising with the SENCO and feeding back to governors regarding all aspects of SEN including:

- Link to Disabled Children's Service for support to families for some pupils with high needs – [Request for Social Care](#)
- Access to local authority's service level agreement with Speech and Language Therapy Services / Occupational Therapy Services / Physiotherapy Services for pupil with requirement for direct therapy or advice – [Referrals to Kent Community Health](#)
- Ability to make ad hoc. requests for advice from Communication and Assistive Technology Team, etc.- [CAT Service Information](#)
- Membership of professional networks for SENCO, Dover SENCO forum.

11 The contact details of support services for the parents of pupils with special educational needs, including those for arrangements made in accordance with clause 32 (Parent Partnership Services)

Information Advice and Support Kent (IASK) provides a free and confidential, information, advice and support service, for parents of a disabled child or child with special educational needs and to children and young people up to age 25 who have a special educational need or disability.

Trained staff can provide impartial legally based information and support on educational matters relating to special educational needs and disabilities, including health and social care. The aim is to empower parents, children and young people to fully participate in discussions and make informed choices and decisions.

They can be contacted on:

HELPLINE: 03000 41 3000

Office

Email – iask@kent.gov.uk

www.kent.gov.uk/iask

Kent PACT is a way to empower you as parents and carers and enable you to have your say. This is forum for parents and carers of children and young people who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) within Kent local authority.

The combined voices of Kent PACT are fed into how services are designed and delivered in Kent. They are part of a National Network of Parent Carer Forums and are supported by parent led charities that you may know in your local area.

[Kent PACT](#) Email - info@kentpact.org.uk

12 The school's arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs in transferring between phases of education or in preparing for adulthood and independent living

At St Mary's CEP we work closely with the educational settings used by the pupils before they transfer to us in order to seek the information that will make the transfer as seamless as possible.

On entry to the EYFS our Reception teacher meets the staff and children in their previous setting to discuss any concerns. For more complex needs a transition meeting is arranged with nursery, SENCO, reception teacher and parents prior to the child starting school.

We also contribute information to a pupils' onward destination by providing information to the next setting. The SENCO meets with the secondary SENCO to discuss any concerns prior to the child starting secondary school. Extra consideration and visits are put in place for children with SEMH.

Annual review meetings for children with an EHC Plan transitioning to KS3 are held in accordance with KCC transition recommendations. Early communication links are made with receiving schools and information sharing is completed in accordance with their admissions.

Parents are supported to make timely and informed applications to their Secondary school choices.

13 Information on where the local authority's local offer is published.

The local authority's local offer is published on <http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs> and there is a link to this on the school website. Parents without internet access should make an appointment with the SENCO for support to gain the information they require.