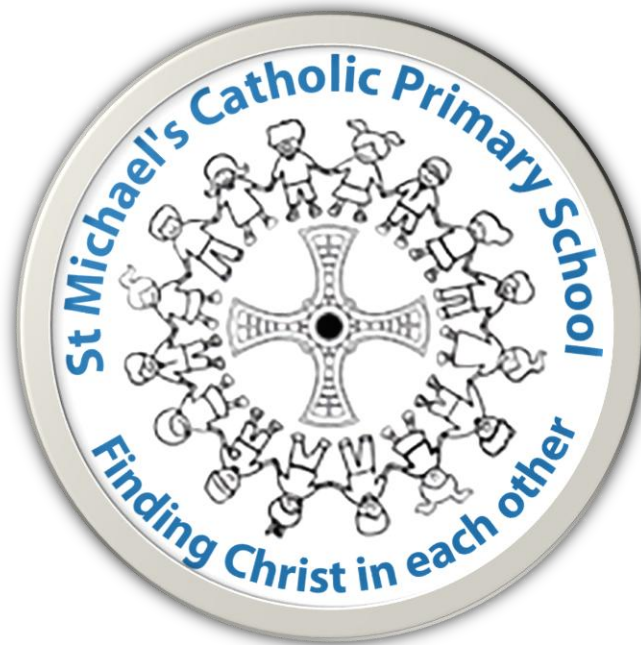


St Michael's Catholic Primary School



Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy 2025-26



St. Michael's Catholic Primary School Our Mission Statement

'Finding Christ in each other'

'Catholic Education is above all a question of helping to form Christ in the lives of others.'

Pope John Paul II

The School aims to promote Catholic values based on the teachings of Christ and to bring all members of the school community – staff, children, parents and governors – closer to God through the daily practice of those values in all areas of school activity.

Our Ethos/ Vision

At St Michael's Primary school we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to achieve their best. The achievement, attitude and well-being of every child matters and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone within our school. Every teacher is a teacher of every pupil, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. We respect the unique contribution which every individual can make to our school community.

Definition of SEN and Disability (SEND)

At our school we use the definition for SEN and for disability from the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This states:

SEN: A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A learning difficulty or disability is a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age. Special educational provision means educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for others of the same age in a mainstream setting in England.

Disability: 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.'

Key Roles and Responsibilities

The SENDCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans. The SENDCO is also the Head Teacher and the designated teacher for Looked After Children (LAC). **The SENDCO is Christina Parker.**

SEN Governor: **The SEND governor is Helen Gillingham.** She has responsibility for monitoring policy implementation and liaising between the SENDCO and the Governing Body.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): The head teacher, Christina Parker, has specific responsibility for safeguarding and is the DSL., Lauren Blakey and Kathryn Dunn are to act as the DSL in Christina Parker's absence.

Intent

At St Michael's, all pupils, regardless of their particular needs, are provided with inclusive teaching which will enable them to make the best possible progress and feel that they are a valued member of the wider school community. We expect that all pupils with SEND will meet or exceed the high expectations we set for them against national data and based on their age and starting points. We will use our best endeavours to give pupils with SEND the support they need, whilst having access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Working in partnership with families, it is our aim that pupils will become confident individuals able to make a successful transition on to the next phase of their education.

Objectives:

- To ensure a clear process for identifying, assessing, planning, providing and reviewing for SEND pupils, with the pupils and their parents/carers at the centre.
- To develop effective whole school provision management of support for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

- To deliver training and support for all staff working with pupils with SEND in order to develop our practice within the guidance set out in the Code of Practice, July 2014.

Implementation

Identification of Needs

The identification of SEND is embedded in the whole school process of monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. We recognise the benefits of early identification and making effective provision in improving the long-term outcomes for children with SEN. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take, not to fit the pupil into a category. It is also important to identify the full range of needs, not simply the primary need of an individual pupil.

The Code of Practice refers to four broad areas of need:

1. **Communication and interaction**-these children have a 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. For example, children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD), including Asperger syndrome, 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.
2. **Cognition and learning**-children with learning difficulties learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs from moderate learning difficulties (MLD) to children with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning, such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
3. **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**-children 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 displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder.
4. **Sensory and/or physical needs**-some children require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. Many children with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and /or equipment to access their learning.

A Graduated Approach to SEN Support

How the school decides whether to make special educational provision

A process of on-going teacher assessments and termly pupil progress meetings with the leadership team identifies those pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. The school's first response is high quality targeted teaching by the class teacher. This may include joining a small group intervention that focuses on developing the skills that have been identified as weak e.g. number, spelling, handwriting. Where progress continues to be less than expected, the class teacher will discuss their concerns with the SENDCO and parents (a 'short note' is completed).

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENDCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside the views of

parents/carers and pupil. During this stage extra teaching or 1:1 interventions may be put in place as a pupil's response to such support can help to identify their particular needs.

Particular care is taken when identifying and assessing SEN for children whose first language is not English. Where pupils have higher levels of need, and with parental permission, the school may seek advice from external agencies. These agencies include:

- Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- Cognition and Learning team
- Autism and Social Communication Team
- Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Emotional Well-being and Effective Learning service (EWEL)
- Neurodevelopmental Pathway (via CAMHS)
- Occupational Therapy Service
- Educational Welfare Team
- Children's Services
- School Nurse/Paediatric health team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

If the support needed can be provided by adapting the school's core offer then a child might not be considered SEND or placed on the SEND register. If, however, the support required is different from or additional to what is ordinarily offered by the school, the child will be placed on the SEND register at SEND Support level. The school will then seek to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This begins a cycle of **assess, plan, do, review** with the child/young person at the centre of the process. Where a child and family would benefit from co-ordinated support from more than one agency, an Early Help Assessment may be used to identify help required and to prevent needs escalating.

The four part cycle:

Assess: We will ensure that we regularly assess all pupils' needs so that each child's progress and development is carefully tracked compared to their peers and national expectations. We will listen to the views and experience of parents/carers and the pupil. In some cases we will draw on assessments and guidance from other education professionals e.g. Educational Psychologists (EP) and from health and social services.

Plan: Where SEND Support is required, the teacher and SENDCO will put together a SEND Support plan outlining the interventions, adaptations and support which will be put in place for the pupil as well as the expected outcomes and a 'review of progress' section. Outcomes for the pupil will be shared with her/him using child friendly language and with parents/carers. All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the plan. All plans are kept in the class teacher's intervention file.

Do: The class teacher is responsible for working with the pupil on a daily basis. She/he will also liaise closely with TAs or specialists who provide support set out in the plan and monitor the progress being made. The SENDCO will provide support, guidance and advice for the teacher.

Review: The plan including the impact of the support and interventions will be reviewed each term by the teacher, relevant TAs, SENDCO, parent/carer and the pupil. This will inform the planning of next steps for a further period or where successful the removal of the pupil from SEN Support.

This four-part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and what supports the pupil in making good progress is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches and more specialist expertise in successive cycles

(For further information see County Durham Families website.)

Parents/carers and pupil involvement in the process

We believe in a person-centered approach to information gathering and the cycle of assess, plan, do, review. Termly reviews and outcome setting meetings are planned to coincide with parents' evenings where possible. Outcomes are shared with pupils and successes are celebrated. Annual review meetings are held for children with an Educational Health Care Plan.

SEND Provision

SEND support can take many forms. This could include:

- an individual learning programme
- evidence based interventions e.g. Better Reading programme
- extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant within class
- making or changing materials, resources or equipment e.g. use of coloured paper
- working with a child in a small group
- maintaining specialist equipment e.g. iPad with Clicker
- observing a child in class or at break and keeping records
- helping a child to take part in the class activities
- making sure that a child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult
- helping other children to work with a child, or play with them at break time
- supporting a child with physical or personal care difficulties, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing
- access to emotional and wellbeing groups led by specially trained TAs
- Provision of a sensory diet and movement breaks

Managing the needs of Pupils on the SEND Register

Each pupil with SEND is an individual and their SEND Support plan is tailored to meet their particular needs. Plans are reviewed termly with parents and pupils.

Decisions regarding the level of support provided are needs led, working within the constraints of the school budget.

The class teacher is responsible for:

- the progress and development of all pupils including those with SEND
- ensuring the plan is implemented in the classroom
- regular liaison with parents and the SENCO
- effective deployment of additional adults
- Identifying on class planning the provision they are making for pupils with SEND
- ensuring that day to day provision is in place for the pupils they support

Teaching Assistants are responsible for:

- implementing agreed strategies and programmes, and advice from specialists.
- record keeping
- resources
- maintaining specialist equipment
- regular communication with class teacher and SENCO

The SENDCO is responsible for:

- the SEND policy and its implementation
- Updating the SEND Information report on the website at least annually
- co-ordinating support for children with SEND
- updating the SEND register, Provision Map and monitoring Pupil Profiles and Class intervention files
- monitoring the quality of provision and impact of interventions
- attending network meetings and updating staff
- referrals to and liaison with outside agencies
- line managing TAs with responsibility for SEND
- liaising with and advising staff
- maintaining regular liaison with parents/carers
- co-ordinating annual reviews
- supporting staff in identifying pupils with SEN.
- mapping provision throughout the school
- maintaining links and information sharing with receiving schools

Criteria for removing pupils from the SEND Register

When a child has made sufficient and sustained progress towards achieving their personal outcomes and it is felt that they are able to maintain this with quality first teaching, they may be removed from the SEND register. The school will continue to monitor pupils recently removed from the register to ensure good progress is maintained.

Requesting an Educational, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment

A small number of pupils, whose needs are complex and long term, may require a greater level of support than that provided at SEND Support level from the school's own resources. For these pupils a request will be made to the local authority to conduct an assessment of education, health and care needs. This may result in an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan being provided. This brings together the child's health and social care needs as well as their special educational needs.

(See guidance on Durham County Families website for further information regarding requests for EHC plans)

Supporting parents/carers and children

We provide support in the following ways:

- the headteacher and SENCO operate an open door policy for parents/carers seeking support and advice.
- TAs trained in emotional literacy techniques working with parents
- the dedicated SEN Governor who is available as a contact point
- individual arrangements can be made for phased entry into Reception class
- additional time and special arrangements for SATs
- support for transition between lessons
- a transition group for vulnerable Y6 pupils transferring to secondary school
- inviting the SENDCO of the receiving secondary school to the final Annual Review in year 6.
- Signposting parents to current and relevant training and support groups

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions

The school recognises that pupils with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Where it is the case that a medical condition meets the criteria of disability the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments will always be made to promote access to all areas of the school curriculum for pupils with a disability, e.g. an extra adult to accompany a child on a school trip/residential.

Specific staff have training to support particular needs, e.g. technical knowledge to maintain hearing aids and equipment, administering medicines, managing diabetes or managing allergies.

Higher-Level Teaching Assistant, **Claire Johnston** is responsible for the administration of medicines and medical plans/protocols.

Impact

The head teacher and the leadership team regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of provision for all pupils. The school aims to use interventions in school that have proven outcomes and are evidence based. The impact of SEND provision on the progress and outcomes for children on the SEND register is measured through:

- analysis of pupil tracking data and test results at pupil progress meetings
- progress against national data and based on their age and starting points.
- interventions baseline and exit data
- progress against individual outcomes
- pupils' work and interviews

The SENDCO oversees provision for each class. Decisions are made as to whether specific interventions are proving to be effective in terms of impact, time spent on them and the finance used in providing them. Each year we review the needs of the cohort and if necessary make changes to our provision.

The SEND Governor is responsible for:

- monitoring the effective implementation of the SEND policy
- liaising termly with the SENCO
- reporting to the governing body on SEND
- ensuring that pupils with SEND participate fully in school activities

Training and development

Training needs are identified in response to the needs of pupils currently on the SEN register.

School staff have specific training and expertise in speech and language, motor skills, literacy and numeracy interventions, Clicker and supporting children with hearing impairment, autism, ADHD and dyslexia.

The SENCO attends termly network meetings to share good practice with colleagues in the Durham area keep up to date with SEND developments.

Storing and Managing Information

Pupil records and SEN information may be shared with staff working closely with SEN pupils to enable them to better meet the individual child's needs. We are grateful to parents for their information sharing and openness and respect their confidentiality. Pupil SEND files are kept in a locked filing cabinet. Individual SEN files are transferred to receiving schools when pupils leave St Michael's.

Reviewing the SEND Policy

The SEND policy is reviewed annually by the governing body.

Date of next review: September 2026.

Complaints

We urge parents/carers with any concerns regarding the SEND policy or the provision made for their child at St Michael's to speak to us as soon as possible. In the first instance, please speak to the class teacher or the SENdCO. If parents/carers feel their child's needs are still not being met they should make an appointment to see the head teacher.

If concerns are still unresolved, parents may wish to use the Durham Families Information, or engage with the School complaints procedures.

Access to this policy

You can get a copy of our policy in a number of ways:

- The school website, follow the link across the top of the page (SEND)
- A hard copy on request at the school office

Please let us know if you need this policy to be made available to you in a different format e.g. enlarged font or a language other than English.

Compliance

The policies, procedures and practices of the school in relation to children with Special Needs are in line with current legislation and guidance. Legislation includes Special Educational Needs and Disability Acts and the Disability Discrimination Act.

Equal Opportunities

At St Michael's School we believe that every individual within the school has the opportunity to achieve their full potential and has the same chance and equal access to all areas of the curriculum.

Disability Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been written with reference to and in consideration of the school's Disability Equality Scheme. Assessment will include consideration of issues identified by the involvement of disabled children, staff and parents and any information the school holds on disabled children, staff and parents.