

# St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Primary School

## Special Educational Needs Policy

### School Mission Statement:

We are a Roman Catholic Community committed to:

- Mutual respect, positive encouragement and participation.
- Recognising the different personal and educational needs of all pupils.
- The delivery of the full national curriculum together with a religious education syllabus approved by the Catholic Church.
- The highest standards of teaching, learning and performance.
- Maintaining a supportive partnership with parents, the parish, and the wider community.
- The professional development of all staff.

### Context

All children have the human right to learn and to be educated alongside their peers. At St Thomas' we are fully committed to meeting the needs of those pupils with Special Educational Needs so far as is reasonably practicable and compatible with the provision of the efficient education of other pupils. At St Thomas' we believe that all children have rights to a full, enriching and enjoyable curriculum, irrespective of race, belief, gender, background or ability. We aim to meet each child's requirements, making necessary adaptations and taking into account their needs and wishes. We will consult with children, parents and outside agencies to help support our good practice. Strengths will be acknowledged as well as difficulties, so that adaptations will be made relevant to the individual child. We focus on individual progress as the main indicator of success. Every child is valued. Every child is an individual with a personality, needs and interests. We believe in the right of children to feel safe and to enjoy their school experience – thus developing the whole child, academically, socially, physically, morally, emotionally and spiritually.

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people. Some children and young people need educational provision that is additional to or different from this.

This is special educational provision under Section 21 of the Children and Families Act 2014.  
SEN Code of Practice 2014 paragraph 1.24

### Introduction

The whole team at our school is committed to providing a welcoming, attractive and stimulating environment to support the needs and develop the learning of the children and families in the community. Every child and family in our community is valued and diversity is celebrated. Our school is staffed by a team of qualified teachers and teaching assistants. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum in a safe, stimulating and caring environment which allows everyone to achieve, develop, learn and grow.

All areas of school life are inclusive and the teaching is tailored towards individual learning providing challenge and support; encouraging everyone to reach their full potential. Staff provide a positive ethos to enable the children to work towards the development of 'life skills' and instil life-long learning aspirations for everyone through a range of activities which are fun and enjoyable.

### Objectives of the Policy

In providing for those pupils defined as having SEN at St Thomas' we seek to:

- Provide the highest standard of education for all pupils.
- Value all pupils in our school equally.
- Ensure that all pupils have equal access to a broad, balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to meet individual needs and abilities so that pupils make progress.
- Work in partnership with parents/ carers and children.
- Ensure that teachers carry out their responsibilities in identifying Special Educational Needs, thus aiding early assessment.
- Ensure pupil's needs are met as soon as possible.
- Work proactively with the LA and other agencies in identifying, assessing and meeting Special Educational Needs.

This policy will contribute to achieving these objectives by ensuring that provision for pupils with SEN is a matter for the whole school and is a part of the continuous cycle of assessment and review.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring pupil progress is tracked systematically and action is taken to address needs at an early stage.
- Identifying individuals with special educational needs.
- Ensuring all class teachers are trained and equipped to support different additional needs.
- Keeping up to date with research and best practice.
- Working in a cooperative, productive partnership with the LA and other outside agencies to ensure there is a multi-professional approach to meeting the needs of all vulnerable learners.
- Listening to pupils and parents, working in partnership with them, respecting their views and concerns.
- Promoting children's self-esteem and emotional well-being and helping them to form and maintain worthwhile relationships based on respect for themselves and others.
- Offering quality provision which meets needs is value for money and leads to good outcomes.

### **Definition**

Special educational provision means educational provision that is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LA or other advisory body, other than special schools in the area.

Definitions of special educational needs (SEN) taken from section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014.

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 them.

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

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them 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.

A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if they fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

### **Roles and Responsibility for Co-ordination of SEN Provision**

Provision for pupils with SEN is a matter for the school as a whole. Responsibility for the organisation and monitoring of provision:

The person responsible for overseeing the provision for children with SEN is the Executive Head Teacher: Mrs C. Redmond.

The person co-ordinating the day to day provision of education for pupils with SEN is the school SENCo. At St Thomas of Canterbury, the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordination, known as the SENCo, is Mrs Thomas who has completed the National SENCo Award.

SENCo duties include:

- Helping to co-ordinate provision.
- Liaising with and advising teachers and support staff.
- Overseeing the records of all children with SEN.
- The administration of reviews and SEN Register.
- Liaising with parents of children with SEN (in conjunction with class teachers.)
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff.
- Liaising with external agencies, including The LA, Educational Psychology Services, Health and Social Services and voluntary bodies.
- The SENCO is responsible for reporting to the governor with responsibility for SEN
- Supporting the Head Teacher.

## **Governing Body**

The school governing body have specific responsibility to:

- Do its best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN.
- Ensure that, pupil's needs are made known to all who are likely to teach them.
- Ensure that all teachers are aware of the importance of identifying and providing for those pupils who have SEN.
- Ensure that pupils with SEN are enabled to access the National Curriculum alongside their peers.
- Ensure that parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN provision is being made for their child.

## **Parents and Carers**

At St Thomas' we value and accept the positive role and contribution parents/carers can make. We make every effort to work in full co-operation with parents/carers, recognising and respecting their roles and responsibilities. Parents/carers are encouraged to work with the school and other professionals to ensure that their child's needs are identified and met as early as possible. In order that parents play an active part in their child's development, the school endeavours to provide relevant information so they can reinforce learning in the home.

We acknowledge the difficulties parents/carers can face when their child is going through an Education, Health Care Plan application therefore, we endeavour to provide extra support as their child goes through the process.

## **School Staff**

All teachers are teachers of children with SEN and do their best to adapt the curriculum to meet their needs. Class teachers, through quality first teaching and differentiation, are responsible for setting suitable learning challenges, responding to pupils' diverse needs, for overcoming potential barriers to learning and for monitoring progress.

## **Admission Arrangements**

The admission arrangements for all pupils are in accordance with national legislation, including the Equality Act 2010. This includes children with any level of SEN; those with Education, Health and Care Plans and those without.

## **Identification of Pupils Needs**

Identification: A graduated approach:

Quality First Teaching

- a) Any pupils who are falling significantly outside of the range of expected academic achievement in line with predicted performance indicators and grade boundaries will be monitored.
- b) Once a pupil has been identified as possibly having SEN they will be closely monitored by staff in order to gauge their level of learning and possible difficulties.
- c) The child's class teacher will take steps to provide differentiated learning opportunities that will aid the pupil's academic progression and enable the teacher to better understand the provision and teaching style that needs to be applied.
- d) The SENCO will be consulted as needed for support and advice and may wish to observe the pupil in class.
- e) Through (b) and (d) it can be determined which level of provision the child will need going forward.
- f) If a pupil has recently been removed from the SEN register they may also fall into this category as continued monitoring will be necessary.
- g) Parents will be informed of every stage of their child's development and the circumstances under which they are being monitored. They are encouraged to share information and knowledge with the school.
- h) The child is recorded by the school as cause for concern but this does not automatically place the child on the school's SEN register. Any concerns will be discussed with parents informally or during parents' evenings.

We accept the principle that pupils' needs should be identified and met as early as possible. There are four areas of need as stated in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014. Whilst these four areas broadly identify the primary need of a pupil we also consider the needs of the whole child, which may also impact on a pupil's progress

- Communication and Interaction (C and I)
- Cognition (Cog)
- Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH)
- Sensory and/or Physical. (S/P)

Whilst these four areas broadly identify the primary need of a pupil we also consider the needs of the whole child, which may also impact on a pupil's progress:

- Disability
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language (EAL)
- Being in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant. (PP)
- Being a Looked After Child (CLA)
- Being a child of a service woman/man.

The SENCO works closely with the senior leadership team, using whole school tracking data as an early identification indicator. We use a number of additional indicators of special educational needs

- the analysis of data, including entry profiles at FS1 and 2 baseline and end of FS
- data, SATs, reading ages, annual and termly pupil assessments
- The use of our local authority SEN criteria
- The following up of teacher concerns
- following up parental concerns
- tracking individual pupil progress over time
- Information from previous schools on transfer
- Information from other services

### **SEN Support**

Where it is determined that a pupil does have SEN, parents will be formally advised of this and the pupil's name will be added to the SEN register. The aim of formally identifying a pupil with SEN is to help school ensure that effective provision is put in place and so remove barriers to learning.

The support provided consists of a four – part process: Assess, Plan, Do, Review. This is an ongoing cycle to enable the provision to be refined and revised as the understanding of the needs of the pupil grows. This cycle enables the identification of those interventions which are the most effective in supporting the pupil to achieve good progress and outcomes.

#### Assess

This involves clearly analysing the pupil's needs using the class teacher's assessment and experience of working with the pupil, details of previous progress and attainment, comparisons with peers, as well as the views and experience of parents. The pupil's views and where relevant, advice from external support services will also be considered. Any parental concerns will be noted and compared with the school's information and assessment data on how the pupil is progressing.

This analysis will require regular review to ensure that support and intervention is matched to need, that barriers to learning are clearly identified and being overcome and that the interventions being used are developing and evolving as required. Where external support staff are already involved their work will help inform the assessment of need. Where they are not involved they may be contacted, if this is felt to be appropriate, following discussion and agreement from parents.

#### Plan

Planning will involve consultation between the teacher, SENCO, pupil and parents to agree the adjustments, interventions and support that are required; the impact on progress, development and or behaviour that is expected and a clear date for review. Parental involvement may be sought, where appropriate, to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

All those working with the pupil, including support staff will be informed of their individual needs, the support that is being provided, any particular teaching strategies/approaches that are being employed and the outcomes that are being sought.

### Do

The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a day-to-day basis. They will retain responsibility even where the interventions may involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class teacher. They will work closely with teaching assistants to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and links with classroom teaching. Support with further assessment of the pupil's strengths and weaknesses, problem solving and advising of the implementation of effective support will be provided by the SENCO.

### Review

Reviews of a child's progress will be made regularly. The review process will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. It will also take account of the views of the pupil and where necessary their parents. The class teacher, in conjunction with the SENCO will revise the support and outcomes based on the pupil's progress and development making any necessary amendments going forward, in consultation with parents and the pupil.

### **Specialist SEN Provision**

#### SEN Support (SENS)

Through SENS, the pupil will get help that is either additional to and/or different from the help that the school usually gives pupils through differentiation. If there are concerns that the pupil is not making adequate progress, the class teacher will discuss this with the SENCo. The SENCo will gather information from the pupil, parents and class teacher. The information gathered will help the school decide what help may be needed. The help will be recorded on a Provision Map. This will only record that which is additional to, or different from, the differentiated curriculum and will focus on individual targets that match the pupil's needs.

These will be reviewed three times a year, though certain children might benefit from more frequent reviews.

### **Referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan**

If a child has significant difficulties which are not improving even with the support given, they may undergo a Statutory Assessment Process which is usually requested by the school but can be requested by a parent. This will occur where the complexity of need or a lack of clarity around the needs of the child are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning provision and identifying resources, is required.

The decision to make a referral for an Education, Health and Care Plan will be taken during the In School Review (ISR).

The application for an Education, Health and Care Plans will be completed by the SENCO and will combine information from a variety of sources including: Parents, Teachers, SENCO, Social Car, Health professionals.

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action points that have been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made by a group of people from education, health and social care about whether or the child is eligible for an EHC Plan. Parents have the right to appeal against a decision not to initiate a statutory assessment leading to an EHC Plan.

### **Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plan)**

Following Statutory Assessment, if an EHC Plan is approved this will be provided by Medway Council. The school and the child's parents will be involved developing and producing the plan. Once the EHC Plan has been completed and agreed, it will be kept as part of the pupil's formal record and reviewed at least annually by staff, parents and the pupil. The person centred annual review enables provision for the pupil to be evaluated and, where appropriate, for changes to be put in place, for example, reducing or increasing levels of support.

## **Review of Pupil Progress**

At St Thomas' we acknowledge the importance of keeping records to meet the needs of individual pupils. The following procedures are followed:

- Class teachers have responsibility for keeping records of concerns, intervention and progress in the class.
- The SENCo is responsible for ensuring that records are kept properly and available as needed.
- If the school refers a child for Statutory Assessment to the LA, a record of the child's work, including the resources or special arrangements already used are made available.
- St Thomas' uses a style agreed by the staff for Provision Maps.
- The Senior Management Team and the SENCo meet with class teachers and teaching assistants three times a year in Pupil Progress Meeting where progress and provision is discussed.
- On transfer to another educational establishment, the school provides full pupil records to the receiving school, even if the receiving school does not lodge a request. Such records include all the information held by the SENCo.

## **Resources**

The SENCo maintains records of all pupils on the Special Needs Register. Each teacher has a Special Educational Needs file containing information pertinent to the SEN pupils in their class which they are responsible for keeping updated and sharing the information with support staff. St Thomas' has acquired a range of resources to support those pupils with SEN. These are regularly added to each year and we try to meet the children's needs when resources are recommended.

## **Evaluating the success of Provision**

This policy will be the subject of ongoing review by the Executive Head Teacher, SENCo, SEN Governor, teaching and non-teaching staff. The school might, from time to time, set specific targets against which the success of particular aspects of the policy can be measured.

### **Complaints procedure**

- In the first instance, parent's complaints about the provision or organisation of SEN are dealt with through the procedures outlined in the Whole School Complaints Policy.
- If there continues to be a disagreement with regard to the SEN provision, the LA should make arrangements that include the appointment of independent persons, with a view to avoiding or resolving disagreements between the parents and the school. Parents have a right to appeal to a SEN tribunal at any stage.
- More detailed information can be found in the new Code of Practice 2014

## **Accessibility to the Policy**

The school makes this policy available in the following ways:

- on the school's webpage.
- paper copies, available upon request from the school office.
- large print copies, available upon request from the office.

The Governing Body believes that all children, regardless of ability and behaviour, are valued equally at St Thomas of Canterbury School. SEN children are not viewed as a separate entity but are part of the whole school approach, and different children's needs are recognised and met through varied and flexible provision throughout the curriculum.

SEN Policy Written by Mrs Siobhan Thomas (SENCo)

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