



ST. PHILIP HOWARD  
CATHOLIC VOLUNTARY ACADEMY

# Special Educational Needs Information Report

APPROVED BY: Margaret Hyde (SEN Governor)

Name: Patricia Barber

Position: SENCO

Signed: P Barber

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The **Special Educational Needs Code of Practice** gives guidance to education settings that helps to identify, assess and provide help for children with special educational needs. It sets out the processes and procedures organisations must or should follow to meet the needs of children.

The Code of Practice 6.79 states that the governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of academy schools **must** publish information on their websites about the implementation of the governing body's or the proprietor's policy for pupils with SEN. The information published should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible. The information required is set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014 and **must** include information about:

- the kinds of SEN that are provided for
- policies for identifying children and young people with SEN and assessing their needs, including the name and contact details of the SENCO (mainstream schools)
- arrangements for consulting parents of children with SEN and involving them in their child's education
- arrangements for consulting young people with SEN and involving them in their education
- arrangements for assessing and reviewing children and young people's progress towards outcomes. This should include the opportunities available to work with parents and young people as part of this assessment and review
- arrangements for supporting children and young people in moving between phases of education and in preparing for adulthood. As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society
- the approach to teaching children and young people with SEN
- how adaptations are made to the curriculum and the learning environment of children and young people with SEN
- the expertise and training of staff to support children and young people with SEN, including how specialist expertise will be secured
- evaluating the effectiveness of the provision made for children and young people with SEN
- how children and young people with SEN are enabled to engage in activities available with children and young people in the school who do not have SEN
- support for improving emotional and social development. This should include extra pastoral support arrangements for listening to the views of children and young people with SEN and measures to prevent bullying
- how the school involves other bodies, including health and social care bodies, local authority support services and voluntary sector organisations, in meeting children and young people's SEN and supporting their families
- arrangements for handling complaints from parents of children with SEN about the provision made at the school.

## **Principles underlying the Code**

The SEND Code of Practice describes the principles that should be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities. These include:

- taking into account the view of children, young people and their families
- enabling children, young people and their parents to participate in decision-making
- collaborating with partners in education, health and social care to provide support
- identifying the needs of children and young people

- making high quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people
- focusing on inclusive practices and removing barriers to learning
- helping children and young people to prepare for adulthood

## **What are special educational needs (SEN)?**

The term 'special educational needs' has a legal definition. Children with SEN all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. These children may need extra or different help from that given to other children of the same age,

The law says that children do not have learning difficulties just because their first language is not English. Of course some of these children may have learning difficulties as well.

Children with SEN may need extra help because of a range of needs, such as in thinking and understanding, physical or sensory difficulties, emotional and social difficulties, or difficulties with speech and language or how they relate to and behave with other people.

Many children will have SEN of some kind at some time during their education. Schools and other organisations can help most children overcome the barriers their difficulties present quickly and easily. But a few children will need extra help for some or all of their time in school.

SEN could mean that a child has difficulties with:

- organising themselves; or
- some kind of sensory or physical needs which may affect them in school.

These are just examples.

## **The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)**

The SENCO here at St Philip Howard Catholic Voluntary Academy is *Mrs Barber*.

The SENCO has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy and co-ordinating of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN, including those who have EHC plans, working closely with staff, parents and carers, and other agencies.

The SENCO provides professional guidance to colleagues with the aim of securing high quality teaching for children with SEN, and works closely with staff, parents and other agencies. The SENCO works with professionals providing a support role to families to ensure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching.

The SENCO plays an important role with the Headteacher and governing body in determining the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school in order to raise the achievement of children with SEN. The governor with responsibility for SEN is Margaret Hyde. We place great importance on identifying special educational needs early so that we can help children as quickly as possible.

## **Support for SEN**

We recognise that children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this by looking carefully at how they organise their lessons, the classroom, the books and materials they give to each child and the way they teach. So all teachers consider a number of options and choose the most appropriate ways to help each child learn from a range of activities. This is often described as 'differentiating the curriculum'.

Children making slower progress or having particular difficulties in one area may be given extra help or different lessons to help them succeed, including special 'catch-up' work and other kinds of support.

We do not assume, just because a child is making slower progress than expected or the teachers are providing different support, help or activities in class, that the child has SEN.

The Code describes how help for children with special educational needs should be made by a step-by-step or '**graduated approach**'.

The graduated approach recognises that children learn in different ways and can have different kinds of levels of SEN. So increasingly, step by step, specialist expertise may be brought in to help the school with the difficulties that a child may have. We will inform parents as soon as we first start giving extra or different help to your child because they have special educational needs. The extra or different help could be a different way of teaching certain things, some help from an extra adult, perhaps in a small group, or use of particular equipment like a computer or a desk with a sloping top. Help may be needed through the graduated approach for only a short time or for many years, perhaps even for the whole of their education.

Help for children with SEN will usually be in the class, sometimes with the help of other adults and occasionally with outside specialists.

## **Parents – what to do if you have concerns/worries**

If you think your child may have a special educational need that has not been identified, you should talk to your child's form tutor or Mrs Barber, the SENCO.

You will be able to talk over your concerns and find out what the school thinks. The SENCO will be able to explain what happens next.

Working together with your child's teachers will often help to sort out worries and problems. The closer you work with your child's teachers, the more successful any help for your child can be.

You might like to ask if:

- the school thinks your child has difficulties;
- the school thinks your child has special educational needs;
- your child is able to work at the same level as other children of a similar age;
- your child is already getting some extra help; and
- you can help your child.

We will consult parents about all the decisions that affect their child. If you, as a parent have concerns or worries at any time, you should share them with your child's teacher, the SENCO, the Headteacher or any other professional working with your child.

Parents will be made fully aware of the planned support and interventions and, where appropriate, plans will seek parental involvement to reinforce or contribute to progress at home. Parents will also be involved in reviews of support provided to their child and have clear information about the impact of the support and interventions, enabling them to be involved in planning next steps.

If you want to talk to someone who is independent and knows about special educational needs, you can get advice from the local Derbyshire Information and Advice service or from national or local voluntary organisations. The School's Local Inclusion Officer is Jeanette Saxby who can be contacted on 01629 533526 and can advise you if necessary. Derbyshire Information, Advice and Support Service for SEND

(formerly Parent Partnership), who support parents with children who have SEN, can be contacted on 01629 533668 or by email at: [iasservice@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:iasservice@derbyshire.gov.uk)

We will provide a report for parents on their child's progress at least annually.

Where a pupil is receiving SEN support, we will talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school. We will consult with parents at least three times a year.

The views of the pupil will be included in these discussions. This may be through involving the pupil in all or part of the discussion itself, or gathering their views as part of the preparation.

A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion is kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff and a copy given to the pupil's parents.

## SEN Support in School

There are four broad areas of need and support which give an overview of the range of needs that are planned for. We regularly review how we provide support across these areas. They are:

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

There are also 4 noted 'high incidence needs' that all schools will come across: ASD, communication, dyslexia and social emotional and mental health.

At St Philip Howard we offer the following forms of provision, as well as working with external agencies to support need:

- Teaching Assistant Support
- Emotional Literacy Groups
- Positive Support
- Counselling and Peer Tutors
- Aspire Centre
- Dyslexia Support
- ICT provision

We use guidance from the *Derbyshire Friendly Files*, *A Child with Autism in my Class*, *the DCC Descriptors of SEN etc.* and *the Inclusion Development Program (IDP) materials*, available at <http://www.nasen.org.uk/onlinesendcpd/>

Teaching Assistants have a wide range of qualifications, including degrees, Post-Graduate teaching Certificates, NVQ level 3 and 2 specialist Teaching Assistant qualifications, First Aid, and all have accessed additional training around child protection, supporting learning and development and their own particular areas of interest.

Only a few pupils will require interventions which are **additional to** and **different from** the differentiated curriculum provided for all pupils. This forms part of the **Graduated Response**.

We assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings and key stages where appropriate. We also consider if a pupil may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and, if so, what reasonable adjustments we may need to make for them.

Class and subject teachers, supported by the senior leadership team and the Specialist Teacher, make regular assessments of progress for all pupils. Identification and assessment of pupils' SEN will include:

- End of Key Stage attainments
- CATs scores
- Assessment for Learning materials
- Standardised tests
- Teacher observation
- Information and advice from other agencies
- Views of the pupil
- Views of parents
- diagnostic tests
- observational checklists
- dynamic forms of assessment which involve:
  - observing and recording responses in different environments
  - identifying strengths and weaknesses
  - identifying learning rates and learning styles

Assessment information highlights pupils making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This can be characterised by progress which:

- 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 the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap

We also assess progress in areas other than attainment for instance where a pupil needs to make additional progress with wider development or social needs in order to make a successful transition to adult life then we would put in extra interventions and support to meet those needs.

Where a pupil is making less progress than expected, the first response to such progress is high quality teaching targeted at areas of weakness. Where progress continues to be less than expected the class or subject teacher, working with the SENCO, assesses whether the child has SEN. The pupil's response to such support helps to identify their particular needs.

## **How we decide whether to make special educational provision**

In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENCO, Mrs Barber, consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This includes high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials. For higher levels of need, we draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

This information gathering includes an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These early discussions aim to develop a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, the parents'

concerns, the agreed outcomes sought for the child and the next steps. A short note of these early discussions are added to the pupil's record on the school information system and given to the parents.

Consideration of whether special educational provision is required starts with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents. This then helps determine the support that is needed and whether it can be provided by adapting the school's core offer or whether something different or additional is required.

The outcomes considered include those needed to make successful transitions between phases of education and to prepare for adult life.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, we take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support takes the form of a four-part cycle (assess, plan, do, review) through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach. It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent review and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the SEN of children and young people.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEN. Where there are concerns, there will be an assessment to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues. If it is thought housing, family or other domestic circumstances may be contributing to the presenting behaviour a multi-agency approach, supported by the use of approaches such as the Early Help Assessment, may be appropriate.

Staff are alert to other events that can lead to learning difficulties or wider mental health difficulties, such as bullying or bereavement. Such events will not always lead to children having SEN but it can have an impact on well-being. We ensure appropriate provision is made in order to prevent problems escalating. Where there are long-lasting difficulties we would consider whether the child might have SEN.

Slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN and should not automatically lead to a pupil being recorded as having SEN. However, they may be an indicator of a range of learning difficulties or disabilities. Equally, it should not be assumed that attainment in line with chronological age means that there is no learning difficulty or disability. For example, some children and young people may be high achieving academically, but may require additional support in communicating and interacting socially. Some learning difficulties and disabilities occur across the range of cognitive ability and, left unaddressed may lead to frustration, which may manifest itself as disaffection, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. We look carefully at all aspects of a child or young person's performance in different areas of learning and development or subjects to establish whether lack of progress is due to limitations in their command of English or if it arises from SEN or a disability. Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN.

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 SEN.

Our approach to record keeping is in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. The provision made for pupils with SEN is recorded accurately and kept up to date. As part of any inspection,

Ofsted will expect to see evidence of pupil progress, a focus on outcomes and a rigorous approach to the monitoring and evaluation of any SEN support provided.

## **Involving Specialists**

Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence-based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's areas of need, we will consider involving specialists. This could include, for example, speech and language therapists, specialist teachers for the hearing or vision impaired occupational therapists or physiotherapists. Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. The involvement of specialists and what was discussed or agreed is recorded and shared with parents and teaching staff supporting the child in the same way as other SEN support.

The SENCO and class teachers, together with the specialists, and involving the pupil's parents, will consider a range of evidence-based and effective teaching approaches, appropriate equipment, strategies and interventions in order to support the child's progress. Outcomes and support will be agreed, including a date by which progress will be reviewed.

## **Requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment**

SEN support is adapted or replaced depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes. Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. To inform its decision the local authority will expect to see evidence of the action taken by the school as part of SEN support.

As young people prepare for adulthood outcomes should reflect their ambitions, which could include higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society.

To support transition, we share information with the school, college or other setting the child or young person is moving to. We agree with parents and pupils the information to be shared as part of this planning process.

We recognise that children make progress at different rates and have different ways in which they learn best. Teachers take account of this by looking carefully at how they organise their lessons, the classroom, the books and materials they give to each child and the way they teach. So all teachers consider a number of options and choose the most appropriate ways to help each child learn from a range of activities. This is often described as 'differentiating the curriculum'.

## **Use of support staff**

We ensure Teaching Assistants are appropriately prepared and trained to support the curriculum, and that pupils are not separated from the curriculum as a result of being supported by a Teaching Assistant. Teaching Assistants provide classroom support as well as extra support outside the classrooms e.g. Homework Club, Literacy support during Tutor Period, revision sessions, specialist support for behavioural/emotional difficulty. A very small number of students access some of their lessons outside the mainstream classroom to enable them to develop their skills more appropriately at a different examination level.

## **Equipment**

We provide for pupils with high incidence SEN requiring low cost, non-customised equipment, e.g. non customised ICT equipment, such as use of laptops, funded from their normally available resources. For



more specialist customised equipment Derbyshire LA provides funding for an Individual Children's Equipment Budget to meet these needs.