



St Mary's School  
CAMBRIDGE

# Special Education Needs and/or Disability (SEND) Policy

*This policy is the responsibility of the Head and is reviewed by the SEND committee.*

*Last review: February 24*

*Next review: February 25*

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## Introduction

### Values and Principles

At St Mary's School, Cambridge (the School) we are committed to offering a broad and balanced curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all our pupils, from EYFS to sixth form including Boarders.

Every St Mary's pupil is accepted and celebrated as an individual with an important contribution to make within the School and to the world around them. St Mary's School, Cambridge is a caring and inclusive school and our Christian framework grounds pupil's education, academic success, and future role within society.

Our SEND policy reflects the principles of Equality Act (2010) and The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), as appropriate for our school. It should be read in conjunction with the School's Equality Policy, Admissions Policy, Curriculum Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Accessibility Plans and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Consistent with the School's Equality Policy, the School is committed to ensuring, through making all practicable and reasonable adjustments, that each pupil has equity of access to the curriculum, and the wide range of additional opportunities offered at school. Each pupil will be supported to fulfil her promise and potential whatever her ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious background, special educational need and/or disability, subject to any overriding health and safety considerations.

## Definition of Special Educational Needs

The expression Special Educational Need and/or Disability covers a wide range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, and communication impairments such as autistic spectrum disorders. It may also include those who have physical disabilities, visual or hearing difficulties, or social, emotional, sensory or mental health difficulties.

The Code of Practice states that, '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 or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age.

In accordance with the Code of Practice, pupils are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because of limitations of having English as an additional language. The Code of Practice states that, 'Identifying and assessing SEN for children or young people whose first language is not English requires particular care. Schools should 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.' Please refer to the School's EAL Policy for further information.

### Disabled children and young people

The Code of Practice says that 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'. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

### Additional learning needs

We use the term, 'additional learning needs' if a pupil has a learning difficulty but their needs can be met in the classroom by differentiated teaching and/or reasonable adjustments.

## Aims and Objectives

St Mary's School, Cambridge aims to:

- Provide a broad and balanced education to all pupils in line with the School's objectives and the SEND Code of Practice
- Provide a supportive environment for all pupils
- Identify the needs of all pupils in order to support progression and good mental health and wellbeing
- Ensure the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 are fully met through the valuing of each individual and their differences, and to this end St Mary's School, Cambridge will use its best endeavours to ensure that the School is accessible and that no-one experiences discrimination, victimisation or harassment
- Ensure that all pupils are protected from harm and neglect through robust safeguarding procedures

- Ensure that where possible all pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and wider opportunities organised by the school, by providing adapted/differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, additional resources, and/or additional support where appropriate.

#### SEND Policy objectives:

- To identify, at the earliest opportunity, any pupil with SEND and ensure that their needs are met with targeted, evidence-based provision
- To support pupils' acquisition of independence skills by offering graduated SEN support when applicable
- To monitor pupil progress to help with the identification of need
- To ensure all staff recognise their responsibility for the continued progress of pupils with SEND including but not limited to, academic, health & welfare, physical & sensory, independence & employability, social, emotional, communication skills
- To monitor and evaluate provision regularly
- To ensure that all parents/carers are informed of their child's special needs and/or disability and provision, and that there is effective communication and partnership between parents and the School
- To ensure that pupils express their views and are involved in the decisions which affect their education
- To promote effective partnership and involve outside agencies when appropriate to meet the needs of pupils with SEND
- To provide support and train staff to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities to pupils with SEND
- To ensure pastoral care is available to pupils with SEND that enables them to build self-esteem by developing in all areas.

## Responsibility for the Coordination of SEND Provision

The Head has overall responsibility for the School's SEND policy. The person responsible for day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy in the Senior School is the Head of Learning Support who provides professional guidance and support to the Heads of Departments and subject teachers, Senior Tutor and Heads of Years, form tutors and Learning Support Assistants. The Assistant SENCo (full-time) and Assistant SENCo (part-time) work closely with the Head of Learning Support and also offer professional guidance to colleagues.

The person responsible for day-to-day implementation of the SEND policy in the Junior School is the Junior School Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo), who provides professional guidance and support to teaching staff and support staff within the Junior School specifically.

The Governors have responsibility for keeping a general oversight of the School's provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are advised by the Head of any major changes in policy and resource implications and are reported to on SEND issues and developments via the SEND Committee. The Governance Committee of the Governing Body has responsibility in this regard.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Major areas of responsibility are set out below but should not be regarded as exhaustive.

### **Head/Head of Juniors**

- ensure that the school meets its special educational needs responsibilities
- informs governors of major changes in policy and their resource implications

### **Head of Learning Support/Head of Juniors**

- review the Special Educational Needs and/or Disability Policy, together with provision and procedures in this area annually, advising the SEND committee of any major changes required

### **Deputy Head (Pastoral & Boarding) (Senior School) / Head of Juniors**

- retain an overview of the progress and performance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disability through her/his work with Heads of Year. The Head of Juniors works closely with the Junior School SENCo.

### **Deputy Head (Data and Operations) (Senior School) / Junior School SENCo**

- generate and provide information to facilitate the identification of pupils who may have special educational needs
- in so far as it is practicable, endeavour to timetable lessons into teaching areas which are accessible to pupils who experience environmental barriers (including those with sensory and ambulant limitations) where this is possible

### **Examinations Officer (Senior School)**

- be aware of the recommendations in special educational needs assessments so that access requirements can be put in place for the pupils for public examinations, and liaise closely with the Head of Learning Support in this regard
- ensure that invigilators are aware of any access arrangements for pupils for public examinations and receive the necessary training

### **Head of Learning Support**

- be responsible for overseeing the operation of the SEND Policy
- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEN, including in Exam Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support
- monitor the progress of pupils with SEND
- ensure that the records of all pupils with SEND are updated on the School's information management system
- co-ordinate arrangements for annual reviews for pupils with an Education, Health, and Care Plan
- liaise with parents regarding assessments of SEND
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning pupils with SEND and know how to use it
- promote awareness amongst staff of the importance of addressing pupil's additional learning needs including those with SEND
- research and develop provision for pupils needs including those with SEND

- advise the SEND Committee of the need for changes in the policy and provision for pupils with SEND
- liaise with the Examinations Officer, Deputy Head (Data and Operations) and Heads of Year to ensure that appropriate provision is made for pupils eligible for examination access arrangements in internal and external examinations
- liaise with the Deputy Head (Data and Operations), Heads of Year, Heads of Faculty, Heads of Department, and the Learning Support Assistants in order to facilitate awareness and understanding of issues concerning special educational needs and to ensure that these needs are being met
- co-ordinate and contribute to staff INSET on pupils' needs including INSET on special educational needs
- communicate with parents regarding provision for pupils who have or may have SEND
- liaise closely with the Junior School SENCo about the learning needs and provision for pupils at the Junior School and to share good practice

#### **Assistant SENCos (Senior School)**

- keep up to date with the latest developments in SEN, including in Exam Access Arrangements, and resource and technological support
- assist with the assessing of pupils for examination access arrangements, arrange follow up meetings with the pupil and their parents, and assist in the completion of Form 8s
- organise the literacy screening of pupils in Years 7, 9 and 12 with the Lucid EXACT, analyse the results and decide, in conjunction with the Head of Learning Support, on any follow up action
- take the lead for the planning and teaching of Year 7, 8, 9,10 and 11 pupils who have support lessons
- carry out any duties delegated by the Head of Learning Support

#### **Junior School SENCo**

- be responsible for overseeing the operation of the SEND Policy in the Junior School
- monitor the progress of pupils with SEND
- ensure that the records of all pupils with SEND are updated on the School's information management system and St Mary's cloud
- co-ordinate arrangements for annual reviews for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan
- liaise with parents regarding assessments of SEND
- ensure that staff are aware of the information available to them concerning pupils with SEND and know how to use it
- provide up to date, evidence-based training on the best way to support all children, including those with SEND
- research and develop provision for pupils needs including those with SEND
- liaise with teaching staff, support staff, and Junior School Senior Leadership Team to facilitate awareness and understanding of issues concerning special educational needs and to ensure that these needs are being met
- co-ordinate and contribute to staff INSET on pupils' needs including INSET on special educational needs
- communicate with parents regarding provision for pupils who have or may have SEND

- liaise closely with the Head of Learning Support about the learning needs and provision for pupils at the Junior School and to share good practice

#### **Subject Teachers and Junior School Teaching Staff**

- familiarise themselves with school policy and procedures on Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
- know the pupils in their teaching groups and their category of need by referring to iSAMS and St Mary's cloud
- undertake their legal responsibility to include adaptive/differentiation strategies in their lesson plans and teaching to meet the needs of their pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
- liaise with LSAs to plan strategies and adapt/differentiate the curriculum for pupils with SEND
- adapt/differentiate homework tasks where appropriate
- follow the agreed school procedures for assessment and recording assiduously, recognising that evidence of their efforts to support a pupil will be required should she be referred for further help from the Learning Support Department
- be proactive in seeking help and advice about how to support pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
- contribute to meetings regarding pupils with Special Educational Needs as requested by the Head of Learning Support or Junior School SENCo
- be vigilant in identifying and reporting pupils who may have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability

#### **Heads of Year (Senior School)**

- familiarise themselves with the School Policy and procedure on Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
- know which pupils in the year group/s for which they have responsibility have Special Educational Need and/or Disability
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Form Tutors about the needs and progress of pupils identified as having SEND
- Head of Year 7 only - liaise with the Junior School SENCo and Year 6 teachers to ensure that information concerning the Special Educational Needs and/or Disability of pupils is known and acted upon as they make the transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3
- Heads of Year work closely with the Head of Learning Support and ensure that parents of pupils joining the Senior School are involved in decision making about any special provision being put in place
- Heads of Year liaise with the Head of Learning Support to identify pupils who are likely to need access arrangements for exams for reasons other than learning difficulties e.g. rest breaks and small group room for students with social, emotional and mental health needs or medical needs

#### **Form Tutors (Senior School)**

- familiarise themselves with school policy and procedure on Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

- know which pupils in their form have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and the category of need and provide appropriate pastoral support
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support and Head of Year over the needs and progress of identified pupils

#### **Heads of Departments (Senior School)**

- familiarise themselves with school policy and procedure on SEND
- ensure that differentiation for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability is included in all schemes of work and is appropriate
- encourage staff to differentiate appropriately in lessons and homework tasks to ensure that pupils with a Special Learning Need and/or Disability are well supported
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of support given to pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability within their curriculum area

#### **Learning Support Assistants**

- be fully aware of the special educational needs of the pupils receiving support
- liaise with the Head of Learning Support/Assistant SENCo/Junior School SENCo as necessary to include but not limited to, pupil approaches and competency, welfare observations, independence skills, social & communication skills and support strategies
- undertake training to support their own professional development

#### **Admissions Team**

- Inform the Head of Learning Support, Junior School SENCo, and Director of Studies as soon as they are made aware of any SEND issues regarding a prospective pupil either by formal comment on the Application Form, receipt of a report/letter or by informal conversation
- The pupil will be assessed as outlined in the Admissions Policy

## **Support Plans**

Support Plans are used in the Junior School. A Support Plan is a working document recording provision that is additional to or different from the usual class curriculum. The pupil and the pupil's parents are invited to share in discussion of the pupil's needs and approaches to address them, and suggestions for parental support will be shared and documented. Teaching strategies and provision are agreed between the Class Teacher and Junior School SENCo. The pupil's parents are sent an electronic copy of the Support Plan. All staff can access Support Plans for all children through St Mary's cloud, so they are aware of each pupil's targets. The Support Plan is monitored by the Class Teacher and Junior School SENCo to ensure pupils have the support they need, and a review of targets is sent to parents at the end of each term. Reviews will involve looking at outcomes and will result in new targets being set as appropriate.

## **A Graduated Response**

To support the acquisition of independence skills, the School uses a graduated response to meet the needs of pupils when appropriate. Class and subject teachers are accountable and responsible for the progress and development of the pupils in their classes, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. In the first instance, any additional learning needs of the pupils are met through high quality (quality first) teaching which is adapted/differentiated for the needs of individual pupils.

When pupils are not making the expected level of progress a further graduated response may be required. Senior School pupils may require input from LSAs through in-class support, and in a small number of cases, pupils' needs may be such that they require Learning Support lessons. In the Junior School, small group support lessons are offered.

## Pupils with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Parents and the School have a right under section 36(1) of the Children and Families Act to ask the Local Authority to make an assessment with a view to drawing up an EHCPs. The School will always seek to consult with parents before exercising this right. If the Local Authority refuses to make an assessment, the parents (not the School) have a right of appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Needs and Disability). If a pupil with an EHCP plan is admitted during the academic year, together with the Local Authority, the School will ensure that the provision set out in the EHCP is met. The School will co-operate with the Local Authority and ensure that an annual review takes place at the appropriate time.

## Pupils with SEND and EAL

If an EAL student does not progress as expected, the SEND Department, in collaboration with the EAL Department and subject teacher observations, may monitor for indications that the student might need additional support. The EAL Department use the Bell Foundation's *EAL and SEND: A Framework for Integrated Provision in Schools*.

[https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/02/The-Bell-Foundation\\_EAL-SEND.pdf](https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/02/The-Bell-Foundation_EAL-SEND.pdf) [accessed 12 February 2024]

## Specialist SEND Provision

The Learning Support Department in the Senior School is made up of the Head of Learning Support, a full-time Assistant SENCo and part-time Assistant SENCo (0.8 FTE), two full time Learning Support Assistants and three part-time Learning Support Assistants. The Head of Learning Support and Assistant SENCos teach small group Learning Support lessons and carry out assessments for examination access arrangements once an appropriate qualification is held.

Our Learning Support Assistants provide in-class support from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 4. Subject teachers and Junior School teaching staff can request in-class support for specific students or for classes in general. Pupils with Special Educational Needs are also encouraged to make requests for in-class support where they feel they will benefit from it. The Learning Support Department make every effort to accommodate requests for support and the timetables of the Learning Support Assistants are regularly reviewed to provide targeted, individual support to priority students.

Learning Support Assistants also deliver small group Learning Support lessons. Learning Support lessons take the place of a modern foreign language in Key Stage 3 and a GCSE option in Key Stage 4. They are provided for SEND pupils who need additional support, beyond the adapted curriculum. Students in the Sixth Form with special educational needs receive one Learning Support lesson per fortnight on their timetable. Depending on the needs of the student, they may attend all Support lessons or opt to 'drop in' when they need additional support.

The Equality Act (2010) makes provision for pupils with SEND to receive targeted lessons/activities to address their substantial disadvantage compared to average peers of the same age. Learning Support lessons are focused on literacy skills, numeracy skills, as well as targeted functional, independence and study

skills. In conjunction with teachers, they may also provide overlearning opportunities, assisting with the understanding of mainstream curriculum lessons.

In addition to form tutors, Head of Upper School and Heads of Year, our team of Nurses, School Counsellor and Chaplaincy also provide support to students who may need help with social, emotional, and mental health concerns.

In the Junior School, LSAs run small support sessions for children who need support beyond the differentiated curriculum. Class Teachers and the Junior School SENCo identify children who would benefit from additional Maths and Literacy support. Class Teachers, with the assistance of the SENCo where needed, prepare the work and activities and the LSAs run the sessions. The sessions take place during other subject time, such as languages.

## Admissions Criteria

The Schools Admission Policy sets out our admissions criteria. Where a pupil is known to have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability, parents are required to provide the School with information about the nature of their child's need and any relevant assessment reports. Parents are encouraged to meet with the Head of Learning Support or Junior School SENCo before their child joins the School so that discussions can take place regarding the required level of support.

## Facilities for Students with SEND

St Mary's Senior School has a dedicated Learning Support classroom on the ground floor in which small group lessons are taught. Both St Mary's Senior School and Junior School have several storeys and currently there are no lifts in either building. If a pupil's access to the environment is temporarily compromised the school will relocate lessons to ground floor classrooms when reasonable and practicable. In Mary Ward House, our boarding house, there are two lifts, one for passengers and the other a goods service lift.

St Mary's Junior School has a dedicated Learning Support room, 'The Hub', located on the first floor of the Junior School main building – Acton House. Here, 1:1 and small group lessons are taught.

## Examination Access Arrangements

Pupils with SEND may be eligible for access arrangements such as rest breaks, extra time, use of a word processor, a computer reader/reader, scribe etc. in school examinations and public examinations. In such cases the School carries out specialist assessments and follows the Joint Council for Qualification's Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments rules.

The School is not able to provide full diagnostic assessment reports to obtain diagnoses of Learning Difficulties and/or disabilities. Similarly, it is unable to provide full diagnostic reports required for access arrangements and resources in higher education. Where pupils wish to continue their examination access arrangements at university and/or apply for a Disabled Students Allowance they should arrange for an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Assessor to carry out an assessment. Commissioning reports from health professionals and external specialists would be a private arrangement between the parents and the assessor and responsibility for any payment rests with the parents.

## Identification and Assessment of Pupils' Needs

As well as information from feeder schools, parents/carers, and the pupils themselves, all new pupils to the Senior School are assessed on entry using the MidYIS test. Subject teachers and Junior School teachers also assess the abilities of the pupils in their classes through observation, classwork, homework, and tests

throughout the year. If assessments give cause for concern, for example if there is a lack of progress or progress is below that expected of the pupil, parents are contacted and invited to meet with the Deputy Head (Data and Operations)/Head of Learning Support and another member of staff (subject teacher/form tutor/ /Head of Year) to discuss the concern and decide on a plan of action. Within the Junior School, parents are invited to meet with the classroom teacher and Junior School SENCo. The views of the pupil are also sought, and they may also attend these meetings.

Sometimes pupils feel concerned about their own learning and approach the Learning Support department staff themselves. When this happens, the concerns are taken seriously. The Head of Learning Support and Junior School SENCo will liaise with the pupil's subject teachers to collect information about their learning and progress and take appropriate action.

When parents raise concerns that their child may have a learning difficulty their views are taken seriously. A meeting with the Head of Learning Support or Junior School SENCo, and relevant teacher(s) are set up and a plan of action is agreed.

The plan of action from these meetings might include arranging for relevant specialist assessments to take place. These assessments may be carried out by the Head of Learning Support, the Assistant SENCo (part-time), an Educational Psychologist, a Specialist Teacher or other relevant professional.

## Records of SEND

Pupils with SEND are flagged up on iSAMS, the School's information management system. The Head of Learning Support and Junior School SENCo use the SEN Manager tool to record information on pupils with SEND, including summaries of assessment reports. They also keep records of meetings with parents and/or outside agencies and these are shared with relevant staff. The Head of Learning Support and Junior School SENCo ensure that any follow up action is taken. Confidential records such as Educational Psychologist reports that are received as hard copies are stored in a lockable filing cabinet in a locked room. All records specifically relating to Exam Access Arrangements are stored electronically within the 'Exam Access Arrangement' tile within St. Mary's cloud.

## Evaluating the Success of Provision

The School has a SEND Committee which consists of the Head of Learning Support, the Junior School SENCo, the Head and Head of Junior School, Deputy Heads, the Director of Enrichment & Partnerships, the Head of EAL, the Head of Boarding and a school Nurse. The Committee co-opt relevant additional members whose expertise in any field would be of assistance.

The Committee's terms of reference are to:

- review the School's policies, procedures, and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils/staff and prospective pupils/staff who have a Special Educational Need and/or Disability
- make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of education, in its many aspects, to pupils or prospective pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future
- review St Mary's SEND Policy and the Equality Policy annually
- prepare and review St Mary's Accessibility Plans annually
- ensure the School is able to provide appropriate examination access arrangements for pupils with Special Educational Needs

- inform other committees (as relevant) about any relevant information concerning variation to, or additional pupil services for discussion and recommendation.

## In Service Training

The School is committed to training staff and updating their skills in relation to SEND. New staff follow an induction programme which includes Learning Support.

Information about the most common types of learning difficulty found at School and suggested ways to support pupils, is available to staff on the St Mary's cloud.

## Working with Parents

The Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCos and Junior School SENCo make regular contact with parents of pupils with SEND. This can be through email contact and telephone conversations as well as review meetings and Parents' Evenings. A record of outcomes, action and support agreed is recorded and/or updated, and appropriate staff are made aware of relevant information. The views of parents are taken seriously.

## Involving Pupils in their Learning

Pupils are actively involved in the learning process. Regular Tracking and Monitoring sessions between all pupils and their form teachers provides opportunities to discuss progress and for pupils to set personal targets.

Pupils with SEND are encouraged to attend and be active participants in review meetings. Their views are taken seriously.

On a day-to-day basis, pupils are encouraged to talk to their teachers about their learning and to seek support and guidance from the Learning Support Department if this is appropriate.

## Links with Other Schools

The Head of Learning Support liaises with the Head of Learning Support at other local schools and Sixth Form Colleges when appropriate. She also networks informally at courses and meetings.

## Links to Support Services

The School is committed to working effectively with support services. The Deputy Head (Pastoral), Heads of Year, Form Teachers, and Nurses as well as the Head of Learning Support, Assistant SENCos and Junior School SENCo are involved with, and co-operate fully with, services such as Social Services, Brookside, The Phoenix Centre, Specialist Teachers etc. when appropriate.

Strong working relationships have been built with local Educational Psychologists.

## Complaints Procedure

Any complaints are handled under the provisions of the School's Complaints Policy and Procedure which is published on the St Mary's School, Cambridge website.