



ST MARY'S SCHOOL HAMPSTEAD

SEND POLICY

September 2026

Reviewed: September 2026
Next Review Date: September 2027

MISSION STATEMENT

St Mary's School seeks to provide an outstanding education firmly founded on the Catholic Faith.

Spiritual and moral principles are nurtured in a way that is reflected in daily life.

Within a happy and caring environment and based on the recognition of the dignity, worth and wellbeing of each child, high standards are expected. Intellectual development is emphasised and fostered along with the pursuit of academic excellence.

St Mary's values the unique contribution of every child within the school community.

St Mary's is inclusive and welcomes girls from all communities and faith backgrounds, or none, and believes that all benefit from the school's values.

St Mary's aims to encourage an active partnership between home, school, parish and the wider community.

Aims and Objectives

The SEND Policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the *SEND Code of practice 0-25 (July 2014 and updated May 2015)* and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: Advice for schools DfE Feb 2013
- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (July 2014)
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions April 2014
- Safeguarding Policy
- Teachers Standards 2012
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework (September 2025)

At St Mary's School, we aim to create a curriculum and environment in which all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, can develop physically, intellectually and emotionally at a pace which is suited to their individual needs and where all children have equal opportunity to access the curriculum in order to realise their full potential. We encourage, in all members of our school, a code of positive behaviour which promotes consideration for and tolerance of the needs of others. We believe that every child should be able to make a valued contribution to school life in order that self-confidence and self-esteem can develop. St Mary's School will seek to remove barriers to learning for all pupils so that they will benefit from the school's resources, ethnicity, level of ability or social circumstances. The school aims to build on the pupils' strengths and foster a challenging and supportive learning environment within the Catholic ethos.

St Mary's School aims to make every effort to secure provision for all children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and to ensure that all staff in the school are aware of the importance of identifying and providing appropriate learning experiences for them.

All children and young people are entitled to an education that enables them to make progress so that they achieve their best, become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and make a successful transition into adulthood. St Mary's School aims to make every effort to secure provision for any child with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and to improve their outcomes through high aspirations and expectations for children and young people with SEND. All staff in the school are made aware of the importance of identifying and providing appropriate learning experiences for them.

All teachers will be teaching children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). Identifying them early and enabling them to reach their full potential, is a whole school responsibility.

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school **must** make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services for disabled children, to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. Where children and young people have Health Care Needs as well as SEND, their provision should be planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with the healthcare plan.

We believe that all children should be able to raise their levels of achievement. This can be done by:

- Accessing an appropriate curriculum that is broad and balanced alongside their peers.
- Stimulating their curiosity, interest and enjoyment in their education.
- Fulfilling their potential so that they become valuable members of society, both now and in the future.
- Enhancing their self-esteem.
- Making good progress towards their agreed targets.
- Focusing on outcomes, not just hours of provision/support.

- Accessing high quality teaching to ensure that they make progress in their learning and development.

The governing body and Headmistress take overall responsibility for making sure the SEND policy and practice meet the statutory regulations. The whole school will be involved in its planning and implementation and regularly review how expertise and resources are used to address SEND and to build the quality of whole-school provision as part of their approach to school improvement. There is a member of the governing body with specific oversight of the school's arrangements for SEND.

Identifying Special Educational Needs

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

A child or young person has special educational needs 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.

The school aims to work in partnership with parents, who have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education. Parents will be told as soon as a child is identified with difficulties, and we will communicate with them regularly. We recognise that some families may require some practical help and emotional support and would aim to help parents contact support groups or voluntary organisations e.g., British Dyslexia Association etc. We aim to use user-friendly information and respect linguistic barriers.

The views of the child will be given weight according to age, maturity and capability. We recognise that some children may have difficulty communicating and they will be supported and encouraged. We aim to fully involve pupils with SEND in all aspects of school life e.g., School Council, clubs, and buddy systems etc. to ensure they have an equal voice.

We welcome the advice of other professionals and aim for close teamwork and effective communication. Cooperation between all parties concerned and a multi-disciplinary approach, with respect for differing perspectives, is the best way forward.

According to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (2014) there are 4 broad areas of need:

1. Communication and Interaction, including:
 - Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Children who have difficulty communicating with others.

- Autism, and all other neurodevelopmental disorders associated with ASD, that are likely to have difficulties with social interaction.

2. Cognition and Learning when children learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation.

- Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, including:

- 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 as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, anxiety or depression. Other children and young people may have disorders such as:
- ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder
- Attachment Disorder

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs. Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which hinders them in school including:

- Vision impairment (VI)
- Hearing impairment (HI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning
- Physical disability (PD) who may require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers

A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

Quality First Teaching

The benefits of early identification are widely recognised – identifying needs at the earliest point and then making effective provision improves long-term outcomes for the child. We assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings. We seek to identify 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

Children could be identified as having special educational needs through:

- Tracking progress through test results which are carried out 3 times a year from Years 1-6
- Formative assessment (observations) in the Early Years
- The concerns expressed by teachers and parents
- SEND surgeries which occur termly with the SENDCo and class teachers

Children will be Identified in a Graduated Approach

A SEND register is kept and reviewed termly. The register includes all children who are either:

- Monitored
- Receive SEND support
- Have an EHCP - Educational and Health Care plan

Children will only be placed on the SEND register in consultation with parents and with a formal diagnosis or programme being delivered by a qualified professional.

Children Highlighted for Monitoring may Include:

- Pupils who may need short-term interventions to remove barriers to help them make expected progress e.g., small group work, reading group, providing equipment such as sloping boards
- Pupils who have recently been removed from the SEND support provision or who have stopped their additional programme (such as SaLT sessions).
- Pupils who may have difficulty accessing the curriculum due to emotional, behavioural and/or medical problems

Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of children in their class. The first response to concerns should be high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness. Planning will be directly targeted towards achieving agreed outcomes.

A child may have difficulty accessing the curriculum and/or is displaying emotional, behavioural problems and/or medical problems, which interfere with learning. A differentiated curriculum will be determined and delivered by the class teacher. It is the task of the subject coordinators and SENDCo to ensure, through liaison with class teachers, that a range of different approaches and resources are available for children who we are concerned about. Within the timetable there is an opportunity for the Learning Support Department:

- To provide small group work for Maths and English for Years 1-6 as the need arises
- To provide in-class support
- To provide reading groups
- To provide spelling /phonic groups

The SENDCo and all staff teaching the child should be notified that the child has been identified as having difficulties and monitored.

SEND Support

Where there are significant difficulties, staff in liaison with the SENDCo and parents, will consider whether the child might have SEND. A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision **different from or additional to** that normally available to pupils of the same age. It may be necessary to carry out an assessment by an outside agency. A decision on whether to make SEND provision will be taken after considering all the information which can be gathered from within the school about a child's progress, alongside expectations of progress. This will include teacher assessments, formative assessments, and appropriate early assessment materials and parental concerns. Where necessary, the school may ask the parents to draw on specialised assessments from outside agencies and professionals, for example, an Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist. When on the register and with interventions in place the school will use the Assess – Plan – Do - Review model for tracking the effectiveness of the intervention.

The SENDCo will work closely with all specialists involved and when necessary, will include their suggestions in an IEP (Individual Education Plan):

- With the help of the Class Teacher, the SENDCo, parent, child (if appropriate) will draw up the child's Individual Education Plan (IEP) outlining the targets which have been set.
- The IEP will only record that which is additional to and different from the differentiated curriculum plan. Parents and children will be involved in the review and informed of progress and if outcomes have been achieved.
- Specific programmes of work, activities and resources will be recorded.
- Parents will be consulted at every appropriate stage.
- Parents who agree to individual help are asked to complete an authorisation form and agree to pay the optional fee in accordance with the school's Terms and Conditions.

If a child makes expected progress and no longer receives individual support they will continue to be monitored, after consultation with parents.

Requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment

Where pupils do not make sufficient progress, despite the school making purposeful and relevant interventions, it may be appropriate to ask the Local Authority (LA) to carry out a statutory assessment of their needs to see if they are eligible for an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

EHC plans are legal documents that help raise aspirations and outline the provision required to support the child or young person in achieving their ambitions. EHC plans should specify how services will be delivered as part of a whole package and explain how best to achieve the outcomes sought across education, health and social care for the child or young person.

The LA will seek evidence from the school that any strategy or programme implemented for the child in question has been continued for a reasonable period of time without success and that alternatives have been tried. The LA will need information about the pupil's progress over time and will also need clear documentation in relation to the pupil's special educational needs and any action taken to deal with those needs, including any resources or special arrangements put in place. In preparing a request the school will involve the parents, pupils and outside agencies and refer to Chapter 8 of the SEND Code of Practice.

Once a pupil has an EHC Plan, the school will ensure that those teaching or working with the child or young person are aware of their needs and have arrangements in place to meet them. The school will ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the course of a year. Formal reviews of the EHC plan will take place at least annually. Parents and children are encouraged to give their opinions and comments. If a pupil's SEND changes, the local authority will be informed and will arrange to hold a review as soon as possible to ensure that provision specified in the EHC plan is appropriate.

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

St Mary's School recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. Children who have severe medical issues have IHC plans (Individual Health Care Plans). Some may also have a special educational need and may have an Education, Health and Care Plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision as stated in the SEND Code of Practice (2014). We have regular contact with Nurses, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Speech

Therapists and teachers for visual impairment on a regular basis when needed, to ensure that provision is effective.

Responsibility for the Coordination of SEND Provision

The SEND Co-ordinator (SENDCo) for the whole school including EYFS is Mrs. Cathy Keane until January 2027, when the responsibility will then be Ms. Priya Sahota's. She is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND Policy and ensures that it is in line with the DfES "*Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years*" 2014:

- The SENDCo will also take the lead in co-ordinating the support team, liaising, advising, and training staff in order to secure high quality teaching for children with SEND. This will involve training, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of interventions to support children with SEND.
- The SENDCo will make sure resources are used to maximum effect. He will also maintain appropriate records, oversee records for SEND children, meet with parents and other agencies and keep up-to-date with national initiatives overseeing the day-to-day operation of this policy.
- Ensure that an agreed, consistent approach is adopted.
- Liaise with and advise specialist teachers and teaching assistants.
- Help staff to identify pupils with SEND.
- Carry out detailed assessments and observations of pupils with specific learning problems when necessary.
- Co-ordinate the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Collaborate with class teachers in devising strategies, draw up Individual Education Plans (IEPs), set targets appropriate to the needs of the pupils, and advise on appropriate resources and materials for use with pupils with SEND.
- Liaise closely with parents of pupils with SEND, so that they are aware of the strategies that are being used and are involved as partners in the process.
- Liaise with outside agencies, arranging meetings, and providing a link between these agencies, class teachers and parents.
- Maintain the school's SEND register and records.
- Assist in the monitoring and evaluation of progress of pupils with SEND through the use of school assessment information.
- Contribute to the in-service training of staff.
- Liaise and support teaching assistants.
- Liaise between SENDCos when children with SEND move onto other schools.

Class Teachers are Responsible for:

- Providing high quality teaching.
- The progress of all children in their class.
- Including pupils with SEND in the classroom, and for providing an appropriately differentiated and resourced curriculum. They can draw on the SENDCo for advice on assessment and strategies to support inclusion.
- Making themselves aware of this policy and procedures for identification, monitoring and supporting pupils with SEND.
- Giving feedback to parents of pupils with SEND.
- Working alongside support staff.

Admissions

We will try our utmost to be inclusive in our admissions arrangements, in the education and resources provided by the school, and to treat disabled pupils as favourably as others, but at present, St Mary's School has limited access for non-mobile physically disabled children. We aim to use IT to provide access to the curriculum for children with poor recording skills.

Persistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has SEND. Where there are concerns, there should 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 is needed, supported by the use of approaches such as a CAF (Common Assessment Framework). Staff should also be alerted 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 SEND but it can have an impact on well-being and sometimes this can be severe.

Where a child with SEND is at serious risk of temporary exclusion a Behavioural Plan is put into place and parents are notified.

We are fully committed to good liaison between educational phases and undertake to ensure that all records and relevant information about children leaving St Mary's School are passed on to the receiving school. In the same way, we strive to obtain information from feeder schools.

All staff are professional and understand the need for confidentiality and the role that is expected of them and, if inappropriate practice is observed, it will be challenged through disciplinary procedures.

Local Offer

Parents are welcome to search their Local Authority's Local Offer on the website which sets out clearly what support is available from different services and how it may be accessed e.g., Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, CAMHS and Educational Psychologist.

SEND Training for Staff

St Mary's recognises the importance of professional training in order to meet the needs of children who have learning difficulties.

St Mary's School has the opportunity to attend some training for teaching children with Special Educational Needs. Staff may also avail themselves of training on offer from other sources. The SENDCo will also organise SEND training within school throughout the year.

EAL

The identification and assessment of the special educational needs of children whose first language is not English requires particular care, as lack of competence in English is not a learning difficulty in the Code. However, if their progress is slow, it should not be assumed that language status is the only reason. The school will look carefully at whether their poor performance is due to limitations in English or Special Educational Needs.

Complaints

The school aims to talk about concerns as soon as difficulties become apparent. Dialogue will be built on a foundation of trust, respect, clarity and openness. We aim to prevent disagreements before they become major difficulties. Where it has not been possible to obtain parental agreement for SEND intervention, the school will endeavour to meet the child's needs to the best of our ability. Where SEND needs relate to behaviour the school will resort to the recommendations of the Behaviour Policy.

The arrangements for considering complaints with regard to SEND provision are:

- Parents to discuss the matter with the class teacher and/or SENDCo.
- To consult the Headmistress.
- To consult the governor responsible for SEND.
- The matter to be referred to the governing body.

The Role of the SEND Governor

The designated governor for SEND will be made aware of the number of children receiving extra provision, the variety of their needs, and school trends in policy, procedures, practice and long and short-term development planning. This will involve termly meetings with the SENDCo. The governing body may liaise with outside agencies in matters where the school is unable to procure the help required.

Evaluation

The SEND Policy is discussed annually and evaluated by the whole staff and updated in the light of this. Changes will also result from Government or LA directives. Further information can be obtained from the DfES "Special Educational Needs, Code of Practice" (2014).