

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) POLICY 2024-2025

ENTITLEMENT

St Christopher's School values the abilities and achievements of all its pupils, and is committed to providing the best possible environment for learning that allows children to be confident with a growing ability to communicate their own views.

THE SEND AIMS OF THE SCHOOL

- To ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced curriculum.
- To provide a differentiated curriculum appropriate to the individual's needs and ability.
- To ensure the identification of all pupils requiring SEND provision as early as possible in their school career.
- To ensure that pupils with SEND take as full a part as possible in all school activities.
- To ensure that parents of pupils with SEND are kept fully informed of their child's progress and attainment.
- To ensure that pupils with SEND are involved, wherever possible, in decisions affecting their current and future SEND provision.

We recognise that many pupils will have special needs at some point in their school life. In implementing this policy, we believe pupils will be helped to overcome their difficulties. All members of staff are involved in developing this policy and it is the Headmistress and Proprietor that will evaluate its effectiveness. All staff are committed to the principles included in this policy. Whilst many factors contribute to the range of difficulties experienced by some children, we believe that much can be done to overcome them by parents, carers, teachers and pupils working together.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her (SEND Code of Practice 2014).

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
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age

Special Education Provision means:

- For a child over two, education provision which is additional to, or different from, the educational provision made generally for children of the same age in maintained schools (other than Special Schools) in the area.

- A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in the paragraph above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

St Christopher's School will have due regard for the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice when carrying out our duties towards all pupils with special educational needs and ensure that parents/carers are notified when SEND provision is being made for their child.

STAFFING

Whilst meeting the needs and requirements of all pupils at St Christopher's School, we also have the responsibility of all staff at our school, the SEND Team of the school is:

SEND Coordinator (SENCO): Mr J Lowden

ADMISSION PROCEDURES WITH CHILDREN WITH SEND

Initial admission to the School from a child with SEND depends upon a prospective pupil meeting the criteria required to maintain and, if possible, to improve the educational and general standards for all its pupils commensurate with the ethos to which the schools aspires. The school must also feel reasonably sure that it will be able to educate and develop the prospective pupil to the best of his or her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the pupil's peers, so that there is every chance that the pupil will have a happy and successful school career and emerge a confident, well-educated and well-rounded person with a good prospect of a satisfying life. These criteria must continue to be met throughout the pupil's time at the School.

The School's policy is to apply these criteria to all pupils and potential pupils regardless of any disability of which it is aware, subject to its obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled pupil or potential pupil at a substantial disadvantage compared to any pupil who is not disadvantaged because of his or her disability.

The school has found that, in our experience at St Christopher's, the inclusion of children with disabilities in our school has greatly enhanced the educational experience and the caring qualities of all the children. These experiences help us all to a greater understanding of our fellow man as our ethos would encourage.

The school asks parents to liaise with school staff to discuss any additional needs that a pupil has. We also ask that parents fill out a form, which includes questions on disability, in respect of a prospective pupil at the time of application. In assessing any pupil or prospective pupil the school may take such advice and require such assessments as it regards as appropriate. Subject to this, the school will be sensitive to any requests for confidentiality.

The SENDCo and Headmistress have the responsibility for ensuring that the School's legal obligations are complied with. The SENDCo and Headmistresses terms of reference are:

- (i) To review the School's policies, procedures and facilities as they are likely to affect pupils and prospective pupils who are disabled;
- (ii) To make recommendations with a view to improving the accessibility of its education in its many aspects to pupils or prospective pupils with disabilities by means of reasonable adjustments and by planning for the future;

- (iii) To review the School's SEND Policy;
- (iv) To prepare the School's Accessibility Plan;
- (v) To review such plans and policies as necessary.

IDENTIFICATION, ASSESSMENT, AND PROVISION

At St Christopher's School we have adopted a whole- school approach to SEND policy and practice. Due to our small class sizes - pupils identified as having SEND are, as far as is practicable, fully integrated into mainstream classes. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the National Curriculum and are integrated into all aspects of the school.

All teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs and teaching pupils with SEND is a whole-school responsibility. The core of the teachers' work involves a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, and assessing, taking into account the differences in pupils' abilities, aptitudes, and interests. Some pupils may need increased levels of provision and support.

All teachers are responsible for identifying pupils with SEND and, in collaboration with the SENCO, will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. Assessment is the process by which pupils with SEND can be identified. Whether or not a pupil is making progress is seen as a significant factor in considering the need for SEND provision.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) identifies 4 Broad Areas of Need:

Communication and Interaction (C and I)

Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives. Children and young people with ASD, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others.

Cognition and Learning (C and L)

Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation. Learning difficulties cover a wide range of needs, including moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), where children are likely to need support in all areas of the curriculum and associated difficulties with mobility and communication, through to profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), where children are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment. Specific learning difficulties (SpLD), affect one or more specific aspects of learning. This encompasses a range of conditions such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMHD)

Children and young people 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. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people

may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.

Physical and/or Sensory Needs (P&SN)

Some children and young people require special educational provision because they have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of the educational facilities generally provided. These difficulties can be age related and may fluctuate over time. Many children and young people with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or a multi-sensory impairment (MSI) will require specialist support and/or equipment to access their learning, or habilitation support. Children and young people with an MSI have a combination of vision and hearing difficulties. Some children and young people with a physical disability (PD) require additional ongoing support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers. Physical and sensory needs cover a wide range of medical conditions in addition to those mentioned above. Some children with physical disabilities may be very cognitively able so the levels of support must be tailored to a person-centred needs analysis of each child's needs and preferences, taking into account the views of children and their families.

IDENTIFICATION (2 Stages)

STAGE 1

The Form Tutor is normally the first person to register the special needs of a child in their care, though any members of staff may raise concerns. Their concerns and professional judgements should be discussed with the SENDCo, and the Headmistress. Following this, the form tutor (alongside any member of staff with concerns) will complete a Cause for Concern form. This will be passed onto the SENDCo who will use it to make further assessments.

The SENCo will then gather information, working with all the child's teachers, involving the parents and children to provide appropriate extra support within the school situation and where appropriate suggest routine checks that may need to be carried out- such as hearing or sight tests.

Support will then be provided by the class teacher, SENDCo and Learning Support Staff. IEPs are prepared and/ or reviewed at this stage. Discussions may take place at this stage for the need for an external assessment, such as an Educational Psychologist or Medical report. This may be undertaken in order to formalise a diagnosis and to provide the school with recommendations in supporting a child's needs. Such an assessment would only be undertaken with parent's consent.

STAGE 2

Outside specialists are involved at this stage in support of the child, staff and parents to provide practical help and guidance.

All those involved with the child are involved in a multi-disciplinary assessment to consider the need for a statutory assessment. This is referred to as a DAF (Devon Assessment Framework)

It is possible, although rare, for SEN funding to be made to independent schools. Therefore, if a parent wishes to place a child with a Statement of SEND/EHCP at St Christopher's, the SENDCo will be responsible for the monitoring and reviewing procedures.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

If a child has lifelong or significant difficulties, they may undergo an Education, Health, Care Needs Assessment which may be requested by the school, parent, health or social care. This will occur where the complexity of need or lack of clarity around the need of the child are such that a multi-agency approach to assessing that need, to planning the provision and identifying resources is required. The decision to make a referral for an Education, Health and Care plan will be taken at a progress review. The application for an Education, Health and Care Plan will combine information from a variety of sources including:

- Parents
- Teachers
- SENCo
- Social Care
- Health Professionals

Information will be gathered relating to the current provision provided, action that has been taken, and the preliminary outcomes of targets set. A decision will be made and coordinated by Devon County Council (including professionals from education, health and social care) about whether or not the child is eligible for an EHC Plan. The school and the child's parents will be involved in developing and producing the plan. Parents have the right to appeal against any decision made by the Education, Health, Care panel; they may also appeal against the school named in the plan if it differs from their preferred choice.

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, professionals external to the school, representatives from DCC and the pupil. The 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 the levels of support. Further information about EHC Plans can be found via the Devon County Council web page <https://ehchub.devon.gov.uk>

INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLANS (IEPs)

If your child requires additional support within their learning, they will have an IEP which will support them and help them overcome any barriers to their learning. Strategies employed to enable a child with additional educational needs to progress will be discussed by the class teacher and SENCO and will be included in an IEP.

Although the SENCO is able to give advice, the class teacher 'owns' the content of the IEP as only he or she can ensure that the strategies are employed effectively. The IEP will include:

- Short term SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound) targets for the child
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Provision to be made
- Proposed review date

- Outcomes.

The IEP only records what is additional to or different from the differentiated curriculum and will include a small number of individual targets to match the child's needs. These will be discussed with the child and parents. The class teacher, SENCO and parents will be invited to review the IEP three times each year, or more frequently if required. Wherever possible or appropriate the views of the child and parents will be considered at these reviews.

PROVISION PROVIDED

The main methods of provision made by the school are:

- Full-time education in classes, with additional help and support by class teacher/subject teachers through a differentiated curriculum and Quality First Teaching
- Periods of intervention to work with a support teacher
- In-class support with adult assistance
- Support from specialists within class or as part of a withdrawal programme

USE OF SUPPORT STAFF WITHIN SCHOOL

The SENCo, in collaboration with the class teacher, will decide the action required to help the pupil progress. Based on the results of previous assessments, the actions might be:

- Deployment of extra staff to work with the pupil
- Provision of alternative learning materials/ special equipment
- Group support
- Provision of additional adult time in devising interventions and monitoring their effectiveness
- Staff development/training to undertake more effective strategies

RECORD-KEEPING OF SEND CHILDREN

The school will record the steps taken to meet pupils' individual needs. The SENCo will maintain the records and ensure access to them (these can be found on the secure school drive). In addition to the usual school records, the pupil's profile will include:

- Information on progress
- Pupil's own perceptions of difficulties
- Information from health/social services
- Information from other agencies

THE ROLE OF THE SENCO

The SENCo plays a crucial role in the school's SEND provision. In our school, this is Mr Lowden who works with Mrs Cottell and the board of directors to determine the strategic development of the policy. Other responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the policy
- Co-ordinating the provision for pupils with SEND
- Liaising with and giving advice to fellow teachers
- Managing Learning Support
- Overseeing pupils' records
- Liaising with the parents
- Liaising with external agencies, support services, Health and Social Services, and voluntary bodies.

For effective co-ordination staff must be aware of:

- The roles of the participants
- The procedures to be followed
- The responsibility all teachers have in making provision for SEN pupils
- The commitment required by staff to keep the SENCO well informed about pupils' progress
- Mechanisms that exist to allow teachers access to information about pupils with SEND
- What exactly constitutes a 'level of concern'
- Mechanisms that exist to alert the SENCO to such 'levels of concern'

THE ROLE OF THE CLASS TEACHER

The Code of Practice clearly acknowledges the importance allocated to the teacher, whose responsibilities include:

- Being aware of the school's procedures for the identification and assessment of, and subsequent provision for, pupils with SEND
- Collaborating with the SENCo to decide the action required to assist the pupil to progress
- Working with the SENCo to collect all available information on the pupil
- In collaboration with the SENCo, develop IEPs/PM for pupils with SEND. The extent of the SENCo's involvement is at the discretion of the school.
- Working with pupils with SEND on a daily basis to deliver the individual programme set out in the IEP
- Developing constructive relationships with parents
- Being involved in the development of the school's SEND policy

THE ROLE OF THE HEADTEACHER

The headteacher's responsibilities include:

- The day-to-day management of all aspects of the school including the SEND provision
- Keeping the Governing Body well informed about SEND within the school
- Working closely with the SEND team
- Informing parents of the fact that SEN provision has been made for their child
- Ensuring that the school has clear and flexible strategies for working with parents, and that these strategies encourage involvement in their child's education.

LINKS WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES/ ORGANISATIONS

The school recognises the important contribution that external support services make in assisting to identify, assess, and provide for, pupils with SEND. When it is considered necessary, colleagues from the following support services will be involved with pupils with SEND:

- Educational psychologists
- Medical officers
- Speech therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Hearing impairment services
- Visual impairment services

SEND POLICY REVIEW

The school considers the SEND Policy document to be important and undertakes a thorough review of both policy and practice each year. The outcomes of this review are used to inform future policies and development plans.

Last Review: 24.8.24

Next Review: January 25