Inclusion Policy

St Mary's Catholic Academy and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academies

"Many hearts, one accorrd: In God's love we learn and grow together to build the kingdom of God.'
'Doing as He tells us: in God's love we learn and grow together to build the kingdom of God.'

(Schools' Mission Statements)

Approved by: / Local Academy Committee	**Date:** September 2026
Last reviewed on:	
Next review due by:	September 2027

St Mary's Catholic Academy and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy considers and follows guidance from the Equality Act 2010.

Special Needs Co-ordinator:
St. Mary's Catholic Academy - Mrs S Rathbone
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy – Mrs R Edwards

Academy Committee SEN Representative: Mrs N Whalley

St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace are fully inclusive mainstream schools that value the individuality and unique strengths of every child. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), are able to participate fully in all aspects of school life and achieve their potential within a caring, supportive and aspirational environment.

We are committed to:

- Removing barriers to learning, achievement and participation that may hinder or exclude individual pupils or groups of pupils.
- Promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- Making reasonable adjustments to ensure that pupils with disabilities can access the curriculum, environment, facilities and wider opportunities available within school.

- Providing a safe, caring and nurturing environment in which all children feel valued, respected and able to thrive.
- Ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND, have access to a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum alongside their peers.
- Supporting every child to develop the skills, knowledge, confidence and attitudes needed to become responsible, independent and valued members of society.
- Ensuring that educational provision for pupils with SEND promotes their academic, social, emotional, physical and spiritual development.
- Providing a knowledge-rich curriculum that develops cultural capital and enables pupils with SEND to achieve well across all areas of learning.
- Identifying additional needs at the earliest possible stage and implementing appropriate support through a graduated approach of assess, plan, do and review, as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- Working in partnership with parents, carers, pupils and, where appropriate, external agencies to ensure that children's views, aspirations and needs are central to decision-making.
- Encouraging and supporting pupils with SEND to participate fully in the wider life of the school, including clubs, educational visits, enrichment opportunities and leadership roles.
- Maintaining high expectations for all pupils and recognising that inclusive practice and high-quality teaching are the foundation of positive outcomes for children with SEND.

St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils. High-quality teaching, including effective adaptive teaching, is the first step in responding to pupils who may have SEND. Teaching is carefully planned and adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, enabling all children to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum.
The school recognises that high-quality teaching, adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils, is the most effective way to improve outcomes and reduce barriers to learning for all pupils, including those with SEND.

Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 Years (2015) states:

"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 them from making use of facilities generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or post-16 institutions. (SEND Code of Practice, 2015, p.15)*

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the school recognises that persistent behavioural, emotional or social difficulties do not necessarily mean that a child has SEND. Where concerns arise, we will consider whether there are underlying needs that require additional investigation or support, including communication and interaction needs, cognition and learning difficulties, social, emotional and mental health needs, or sensory and/or physical needs.
The school also recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in comparison with their peers.

Objectives
The objectives of this policy are:

- To raise aspirations and maintain high expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND.
- To identify and provide for pupils with SEND and additional needs at the earliest possible stage.
- To work within the statutory guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).
- To adopt a whole-school, whole-child approach to inclusion and SEND provision, ensuring that the progress and wellbeing of all pupils are monitored carefully.
- To promote the self-esteem, confidence, independence and wellbeing of pupils with SEND.
- To ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support through the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.
- To provide a qualified Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who oversees the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND provision.
- To support and develop staff expertise through high-quality training, guidance and professional development in SEND and inclusive practice.
- To work in close partnership with parents and carers, recognising them as key partners in their child's education and involving them in planning, reviewing and evaluating SEND provision.
- To ensure that the views, wishes and aspirations of pupils with SEND are listened to and taken into account when decisions are made about their support.
- To promote full participation in all aspects of school life, including the curriculum, enrichment activities, educational visits and extracurricular opportunities.
- To ensure effective partnership working with external agencies and professionals where additional expertise is required.

- To support successful transitions into school, between year groups and classes, and to the next phase of education, ensuring continuity of provision and support.

Identification and Assessment

Identification

St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace are committed to providing high-quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils. High-quality teaching that is adapted and personalised to meet the needs of individual pupils is the first step in responding to pupils who may have SEND.

Class teachers regularly monitor the attainment, progress and wellbeing of all pupils in order to identify any emerging needs as early as possible. Early identification of SEND is essential to ensure that appropriate support is put in place and that barriers to learning are reduced.

In accordance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the four broad areas of need are:

Communication and Interaction
This includes pupils with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and those with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).
Cognition and Learning
This includes moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) and specific learning difficulties (SpLD), such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia.
Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)
Pupils may experience a wide range of social, emotional and mental health difficulties which can affect their ability to access learning and participate fully in school life.
Sensory and/or Physical Needs
This includes pupils with vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI), multi-sensory impairment (MSI) and physical disabilities (PD).

These broad areas of need provide an overview of the range of SEND that schools are required to plan for. However, individual pupils often have needs that cut across more than one area, and provision is always determined by a detailed understanding of each child's strengths, needs and aspirations.
The school values the views of both parents/carers and pupils as an essential part of the identification process. Parents are encouraged to raise concerns about their child's learning, development or wellbeing at the earliest opportunity.

If parents have concerns regarding their child's needs, they should initially discuss these with the class teacher. Where appropriate, the class teacher will consult with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and other relevant staff. The school's SENCOs, Mrs S Rathbone or Mrs R Edwards can be contacted through the school office.

Assessment

The identification of SEND is based on a range of evidence and should not be determined solely by a pupil's attainment or progress. When concerns arise, the school will consider all relevant information, including:

- Teacher assessment and professional judgement.
- Attainment and progress data.
- Observations of the pupil's learning, behaviour and social interaction.
- The views of the pupil and their parents/carers.
- Information from previous settings or schools.
- Advice and assessments from external professionals where appropriate.
- Attendance, wellbeing and wider developmental factors.

The following assessment information may contribute to the identification and monitoring of SEND:

- Nursery baseline assessments.
- British Picture Vocabulary Scale (BPVS).
- Stoke Speaks Out screening tool.
- Reception Baseline Assessment and Foundation Stage Profile outcomes.
- NFER standardised assessments.
- Teacher assessments and ongoing formative assessment.
- Year 2 and Year 6 statutory assessments (where applicable).
- School performance and progress tracking information.
- Standardised assessments, including YARC, Wave 3, HAST and BPVS.
- Assessments and reports from external agencies and specialists where appropriate.

The school recognises that pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) may require additional support to access learning. However, a pupil will not be identified as having SEND solely because English is not their first language. Careful assessment will be undertaken to distinguish between language acquisition needs and special educational needs. Where appropriate, both factors may coexist. Further information can be found in the school's EAL Policy.

The school will not assume that a pupil who is making less than expected progress has SEND. In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), a range of factors will be considered, including attendance, health, disability, EAL, family circumstances, social and emotional factors, and any other barriers to learning. The school will work collaboratively with pupils, parents/carers and relevant professionals to identify and address these barriers appropriately.

A Graduated Approach to SEND Support

All pupils are entitled to high-quality teaching and learning opportunities, regardless of their needs or abilities. High-quality teaching, including effective adaptive teaching, is the first step in responding to pupils who may have SEND. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and

development of all pupils in their class, including those who access additional support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.

Teachers use ongoing assessment to inform planning and adapt teaching to meet the needs of all learners. They have a secure understanding of the factors that may impact a pupil's ability to learn and are committed to removing barriers to participation and achievement wherever possible.
Adaptive teaching strategies may include:

- Flexible grouping arrangements.
- The use of well-designed resources, equipment and assistive technology.
- Cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
- Pre-teaching of key vocabulary and concepts.
- Additional opportunities for practice and retrieval.
- Scaffolding to support understanding and independence.
- Adapted questioning and modelling.
- Appropriate adjustments to the learning environment.

Where a pupil is identified as having SEND, the class teacher will work closely with the SENCO to identify barriers to learning and plan effective provision. The class teacher remains responsible for the pupil's learning and outcomes, even where additional support is delivered by support staff or external professionals.

SEND Support
Pupils with SEND may receive support through:

- High-quality adaptive teaching within the classroom.
- Targeted small-group interventions.
- Individual programmes of support.
- Specialist advice and recommendations.
- Additional resources, equipment or reasonable adjustments.
- Support from external agencies where appropriate.

Where support is additional to or different from that normally available, it will be planned, monitored and reviewed to ensure it is effective and enables pupils to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum alongside their peers.
Each pupil receiving SEND Support will have a Pupil Passport, which will outline:

- The pupil's strengths and interests.
- Areas of need.
- Agreed outcomes.
- Strategies and reasonable adjustments.
- Any additional support or interventions.

Parents/carers will receive a copy of the Pupil Passport and will be involved in its development and review. Wherever possible, the views and aspirations of the pupil will also be sought and recorded.

Assess, Plan, Do, Review
The school follows the graduated approach set out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) through the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

Assess
The class teacher, SENCO, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil will work together to develop a detailed understanding of the pupil's strengths, needs and barriers to learning. Assessment information may include teacher assessments, observations, progress data, parental views and advice from external professionals.

Plan
Appropriate outcomes, support strategies, interventions and reasonable adjustments will be agreed and documented. Parents/carers and pupils will be involved in planning support and determining desired outcomes.

Do
The agreed provision will be implemented. The class teacher retains responsibility for the pupil on a day-to-day basis and for monitoring the impact of any support provided.

Review
Progress towards outcomes will be reviewed regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. Decisions will then be made about whether support should be continued, adapted, increased or reduced.
The effectiveness of SEND provision will be reviewed at least termly by class teachers and the SENCO. Parents/carers will be consulted following reviews and will be offered opportunities to discuss progress, outcomes and next steps. Formal review meetings will take place at least three times each academic year.

Inclusive Curriculum and Reasonable Adjustments
All pupils are entitled to access a broad, balanced and ambitious curriculum. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the school will make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
Provision may include adjustments to:

- Teaching approaches.
- Resources and equipment.
- Classroom organisation.
- Access arrangements.
- The physical environment.
- Educational visits and enrichment opportunities.
- Communication methods.

Pupils' interests, strengths, backgrounds and individual circumstances will be considered when planning learning experiences, enabling all pupils to engage, participate and develop the knowledge, skills and cultural capital needed for future success.
The school maintains high expectations for all pupils and seeks to provide appropriate challenge and support so that every child can make good progress and achieve their potential.

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND Provision
All pupils are entitled to high-quality teaching and an inclusive learning environment. The school regularly monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of teaching, learning and SEND provision to ensure that all pupils are making good progress and that barriers to learning are identified and addressed promptly.

To monitor the quality of teaching and inclusive practice, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and/or SENCO may undertake:

- Formal and informal lesson visits.
- Instructional coaching and professional development to further develop and embed adaptive teaching practices.
- Learning walks.
- Book looks and planning reviews.
- Pupil progress meetings.
- Analysis of attainment and progress data.
- Pupil voice activities and pupil conversations.
- Parent/carer feedback and consultation.
- Performance management and appraisal processes.
- Monitoring of staff training and continuing professional development (CPD).

To ensure the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision, the SENCO will monitor:

- Provision maps and intervention records.
- The impact of interventions through assessment information and progress data.
- Observation of intervention programmes.
- Reviews with class teachers, pupils and parents/carers.
- Pupil voice and participation in the review process.
- Parent/carer feedback.
- Staff training needs and SEND-related CPD.
- The effectiveness of reasonable adjustments and support strategies.

The effectiveness of SEND provision will be reviewed regularly to ensure that support is evidence-informed, responsive to individual needs and enables pupils to make progress towards their intended outcomes.

The outcomes of SEND monitoring and evaluation will be reported termly to the Academy Committee through the designated SEND Governor/Representative, enabling governors to fulfil their responsibilities for monitoring the effectiveness of SEND provision.

The progress and attainment of pupils with SEND will form part of regular pupil progress meetings and will be a standing item on relevant SLT and staff meeting agendas.

Accessibility

The school is committed to meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010 by improving access for disabled pupils, staff, parents/carers and visitors.
The school regularly reviews the accessibility of:

- The physical environment.
- The curriculum.
- Information and communication provided to pupils, parents/carers and the wider community.

Reasonable adjustments will be made where required to ensure that disabled pupils are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.
Further details are available in the school's Accessibility Plan.

Supporting Pupils' Social, Emotional and Mental Health

The school recognises that positive emotional wellbeing is fundamental to children's learning, achievement and personal development. We are committed to promoting

the social, emotional and mental health of all pupils and providing additional support where needed.

Support for pupils' wellbeing is provided through:

- Positive and nurturing relationships with staff.
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education.
- Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE).
- Circle time and other classroom-based approaches.
- Pupil voice opportunities.
- Pastoral support and safeguarding provision.
- Access to targeted interventions and external services where appropriate.

Designated safeguarding and pastoral staff at St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace provide support for pupils through individual and small-group interventions. Where additional support is required, the school may commission specialist services, such as counselling or therapeutic support, including services provided by organisations such as Mind.
Where concerns relate to a pupil's emotional wellbeing, mental health, attendance, behaviour, medical needs or family circumstances, the school will work closely with parents/carers and, where appropriate, external professionals to identify and implement suitable support.

Medical Needs
The school works in partnership with parents/carers and relevant health professionals to support pupils with medical conditions.

Where a pupil has a medical condition requiring support in school:

- An Individual Healthcare Plan may be developed in consultation with parents/carers and relevant health professionals.
- Staff will receive appropriate information and training where required.
- Arrangements will be made to ensure the pupil can participate as fully as possible in all aspects of school life. Where a pupil has both SEND and a medical condition, this information will be reflected in their Pupil Passport and/or Individual Healthcare Plan to ensure joined-up provision.

Pupil Voice
The school values and actively seeks the views of all pupils, including those with SEND. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to decisions about their education, support and wider school experience.

Opportunities for pupil voice include:

- SEND review meetings.
- Pupil conversations.
- Questionnaires and surveys.
- Class discussions.
- The School Council and other leadership opportunities.

By listening to and acting upon pupil views, the school aims to promote independence, self-advocacy and meaningful participation in decision-making, in line with the principles of the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

Bullying
The school is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for all pupils.
The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be at increased risk of bullying, prejudice, discrimination or social isolation. We are committed to promoting positive relationships, celebrating diversity and ensuring that any concerns relating to bullying are taken seriously and addressed promptly.

All incidents of bullying will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies. Support will be provided for both the victim and the perpetrator where appropriate.
Further information can be found in the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

Working Together with Pupils and Families
The school recognises that effective partnerships between pupils, parents/carers and school staff are essential in securing the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the school adopts a person-centred approach which values the views, wishes and aspirations of pupils and their families when planning, delivering and reviewing provision.

Children Looked After and Previously Looked After
Children who are looked after by the Local Authority and previously looked after children have the same rights as all pupils. The school recognises that some may face additional barriers to learning as a result of attachment difficulties, trauma, adverse childhood experiences, separation, loss or placement instability.

These factors may impact upon educational achievement, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing and social development.

The Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, Mrs Rathbone, will work closely with the SENCO, class teachers, parents/carers, social workers and other relevant professionals to monitor progress and ensure appropriate support is in place for pupils with SEND who are looked after or previously looked after.

Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school recognises that parents and carers know their children best and are key partners in supporting their learning, development and wellbeing.

For all pupils, opportunities to discuss progress are provided through parent consultation meetings and an annual written report.

For pupils receiving SEND Support, parents/carers will be invited to attend review meetings at least three times per academic year to:

- Review progress towards agreed outcomes.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current provision and support.
- Discuss any concerns or emerging needs.
- Agree targets, strategies and next steps.

These meetings may take place alongside parent consultation evenings or through separate meetings arranged with the class teacher and/or SENCO.

Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school at any time if they have concerns about their child's progress, wellbeing or SEND provision.

Parent Participation
The school is committed to seeking and responding to parent/carer feedback to help shape and improve SEND provision.

This may include:

- Termly SEND parent forums (SEND parent Café's).
- Annual parent questionnaires.
- Informal discussions and consultations.
- Opportunities to contribute to policy and provision reviews.
  The school will consider feedback carefully and use it to inform future developments in SEND provision.

Pupil Voice and Participation
The school values the views of all pupils and recognises their right to participate in decisions that affect them.

Pupils with SEND will be supported to contribute to discussions about their learning, support and aspirations in ways that are appropriate to their age, stage of development and communication needs.

Pupil participation may include:

- Contributing to Pupil Passports.
- Completing questionnaires and pupil voice activities.
- Taking part in SEND review meetings where appropriate.
- Discussing their views, strengths, interests and aspirations with staff.
- Participation in the School Council and other leadership opportunities.
  The school is committed to developing independence, self-advocacy and confidence so that pupils can play an active role in shaping their educational journey.

Contacting the SENCO
The school welcomes and encourages the involvement of parents and carers. Parents/carers with concerns about their child's progress, wellbeing or additional needs should initially speak with the class teacher. Where appropriate, the class teacher will liaise with the SENCO and other relevant staff.
The SENCOs, Mrs S Rathbone and Mrs R Edwards, can be contacted through the school office.

- Link to school's SEN Information Report-
  http://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/sen
  Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy - SEND

- The Local Authority's Local Offer can be found at
  www.stoke.gov.uk/localoffer
  Local Offer - Staffordshire County Council

Admission Arrangements

http://www.stmarysstoke.co.uk/admissions/.
Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy - Admissions

Transition Arrangements

The school recognises that successful transitions are essential in promoting pupils' wellbeing, confidence and continued progress. Transition arrangements are designed to support pupils when they start school, move between classes and year groups, transfer to secondary school, or move to an alternative educational setting.
The school works closely with pupils, parents/carers, staff and external agencies to ensure that transitions are carefully planned and tailored to individual needs.

Transition Arrangements May Include:

- Meetings between current and receiving teachers to share information about pupils' strengths, needs and successful support strategies.
- Transition afternoons and induction days.
- Opportunities to spend time in the new classroom or learning environment.
- Induction evenings for parents/carers.
- The sharing of SEND records and relevant documentation to ensure continuity of support.
- Pupil voice activities to enable children to express their views, concerns and aspirations regarding the transition.
- Additional visits and enhanced transition programmes where appropriate.
- Meetings involving parents/carers, the SENCO and receiving staff to plan for individual needs.
- Liaison with external agencies and professionals where relevant.

Pupils with SEND

The school recognises that some pupils with SEND may require additional support to ensure a successful transition.

Where appropriate, enhanced transition arrangements may include:

- Additional visits to the new classroom, key stage or school.
- Transition booklets, visual supports and social stories.
- Opportunities to meet key staff before the transition takes place.
- Additional parental meetings.
- Personalised transition plans.
- Multi-agency meetings involving external professionals.
- Careful planning of reasonable adjustments and support arrangements.
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For pupils moving from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3, the SENCO will work closely with the receiving secondary school to share information about the pupil's strengths, needs, outcomes, support strategies and successful interventions. Additional visits and transition activities may be arranged to support pupils who may find transition particularly challenging.

Parents/carers and pupils will be involved in planning transition arrangements wherever possible. If a parent/carer feels that their child requires additional

support during any transition, they are encouraged to discuss this with the class teacher and/or SENCO, who will work collaboratively to identify and implement appropriate support.
Through effective transition planning, the school aims to ensure that all pupils feel safe, supported and well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Training and Resources

How are resources matched to SEND?

The school uses the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review to identify and respond to pupils' individual needs. Resources and provision are allocated according to the specific needs, strengths and outcomes identified for each pupil.

Provision may include:

- High-quality adaptive teaching.
- Targeted interventions.
- Additional adult support.
- Specialist equipment and resources.
- Assistive technology.
- Reasonable adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment arrangements.

The effectiveness of provision is regularly reviewed to ensure that support remains appropriate and enables pupils to make progress towards their agreed outcomes.

Where, despite appropriate support and intervention, a pupil continues to experience significant and persistent difficulties, the school may, in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals, request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment from the Local Authority. This may be considered where the pupil's needs cannot reasonably be met through the resources and provision ordinarily available within the school's delegated SEND funding.

How are the training needs of staff identified and planned for?

St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace are committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to support pupils with SEND effectively.

Staff training needs are identified through:

- Performance management and professional development discussions.

- SEND provision reviews.
- Monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Whole-school priorities.
- The identified needs of individual pupils and groups of pupils.
- Advice from specialist services and external professionals.

Training may be delivered through:

- Whole-school professional development.
- Specialist SEND training.
- Coaching and mentoring.
- Staff meetings and briefings.
- Joint working with external agencies.
- Professional reading and research.

Staff work closely with parents/carers and external professionals to develop their understanding of specific needs and effective strategies for supporting pupils. The school maintains a record of SEND-related training undertaken by staff to ensure that expertise is developed and sustained across the school.

Specialist Involvement

The school values the contribution of external agencies and specialist services in supporting pupils with SEND.

Where appropriate, and with parental knowledge and involvement, the school may seek advice, assessment or support from external professionals to help identify needs, plan provision and improve outcomes for pupils.

Services may include:

- Educational Psychology Service.
- Occupational Therapy.
- Speech and Language Therapy.
- SEND and Inclusion Services.
- School Nursing Service.
- Health Visiting Service.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).

- Counselling and therapeutic services.
- Social Care Services.
- Specialist Teaching Services.
- Other health and education professionals, as required.

Recommendations from external agencies will be shared with parents/carers and incorporated into the pupil's support plan where appropriate.

Roles and Responsibilities

Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)

The SENCO is responsible for overseeing the strategic development and day-to-day implementation of SEND provision across the school.

Key responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND Policy.
- Coordinating provision for pupils with SEND.
- Advising and supporting staff in the implementation of the graduated approach to SEND support.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of SEND provision and pupil outcomes.
- Liaising with parents/carers of pupils with SEND.
- Working in partnership with pupils to ensure their views, wishes and aspirations are considered.
- Liaising with the Designated Teacher for Looked After and Previously Looked After Children where a pupil has SEND.
- Coordinating referrals to and involvement from external agencies and professionals.
- Advising on the effective use of the school's delegated SEND budget and resources.
- Ensuring accurate and up-to-date SEND records are maintained.
- Supporting staff training and professional development in SEND and inclusive practice.
- Liaising with early years settings, other schools, colleges and external services to support effective transition arrangements.

- Working with the Headteacher and Governors to ensure compliance with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010, including duties relating to reasonable adjustments and accessibility.

Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the provision and progress of all pupils, including those with SEND, and works closely with the SENCO and Governing Body to ensure that the school's statutory responsibilities are fulfilled.

Governing Body and SEND Governor

The Governing Body has a statutory responsibility to ensure that the school meets its duties in relation to SEND and disability.

The SEND Governor works alongside the SENCO and school leaders to:

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision.
- Provide support and appropriate challenge.
- Review SEND-related policies and procedures.
- Monitor compliance with statutory duties under the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and Equality Act 2010.
- Receive regular updates regarding SEND provision, pupil outcomes and areas for development.
- Report to the Governing Body on matters relating to SEND and inclusion.

The SENCO and SEND Governor meet regularly to review the school's arrangements for SEND and disability and to support the continuous improvement of inclusive practice.

Complaints
The school is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and aims to resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity through open and constructive communication.

Parents/carers who have concerns about the provision made for their child are encouraged to discuss these initially with the class teacher, SENCO or Headteacher. Most concerns can be resolved informally through discussion and collaborative problem-solving.

Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, parents/carers have the right to make a formal complaint in accordance with the school's Complaints Policy.

Information regarding the school's complaints procedures can be found in the Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website or from the school office.
Parents/carers may also seek independent advice and support from Stoke-on-Trent SEND Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIASS) or access mediation and disagreement resolution services where appropriate.

Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirements and guidance set out in:

- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0–25 Years (January 2015).
- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014.
- The Equality Act 2010.
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (DfE, 2015).
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current version).
- The Teachers' Standards (2011, updated).

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies and documents:

- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Policy and Objectives
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Complaints Policy

This policy was developed in consultation with the Newman Catholic Collegiate, SEND services, school leaders, staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils from St Mary's Catholic Academy and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy.

The Governing Body will review this policy annually, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local authority arrangements.

Approved by governors in September 2026

To be reviewed September 2027

Appendix 1 (from the St. Mary's/Our Lady of Grace Way to Teach Every Teacher is a Teacher of SEND

We know and love our children; therefore, we ensure that all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), experience success and thrive in a nurturing and inclusive learning environment.

• Graduated Approach

- Knowing our children well – identifying their strengths, interests, and specific barriers to learning.
- Using the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle rigorously to monitor progress and make necessary adaptations.
- Setting high aspirations for all children and maintaining ambitious targets.
- Collaborating with parents/carers and specialists to create shared strategies for success.
- Maintaining flexibility by reviewing and adjusting interventions regularly based on children's progress.
- Creating Pupil Passports and sharing clear targets with children in an age-appropriate way.

• High-Quality First Teaching

- Ensuring that children with SEND access the same broad, balanced curriculum as their peers.
- Adapting tasks by outcome, process, and resource to meet diverse needs.
- Ensuring lessons are carefully planned to include manageable steps, with clear success criteria.
- Using consistent routines to reduce anxiety and enhance predictability for children with SEND.
- Embedding multi-sensory approaches (e.g., visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learning methods) to reinforce concepts.

• Effective Use of Scaffolding

- Providing appropriate scaffolds such as word banks, writing frames, and worked examples.
- Breaking down tasks into manageable steps, using clear instructions and worked models.
- Gradually removing support as children develop independence.
- Using peer support, where appropriate, to encourage collaboration and communication.

• Inclusive Questioning and Language

- Adapting questioning techniques to include all learners, using a range of open and closed questions.
- Allowing thinking time and scaffolding responses through prompts or sentence stems.

- Using positive language to build confidence and reinforce a growth mindset.
- Pre-teaching key vocabulary to enhance access to new learning.

• Targeted Intervention

- Using evidence-based interventions tailored to children's specific needs.
- Ensuring interventions are time-limited and reviewed for impact.
- Avoiding withdrawal from core subjects where possible, prioritising in-class support.

• Developing Independence

- Encouraging children to take ownership of their learning by providing tools like checklists and self-assessment guides.
- Promoting self-regulation strategies, such as the use of visual timetables and emotional check-ins.
- Ensuring children have opportunities to apply learning independently, with support gradually reduced over time.

• Effective Use of Teaching Assistants (TAs)

- Deploying TAs purposefully to support learning without creating dependency.
- Ensuring TAs are briefed on lesson objectives and specific SEND strategies.
- Using TAs to facilitate learning through questioning and prompts rather than simply providing answers.
- Involving TAs in the assessment and review process of children's progress.

• Positive Relationships

- Building trusting, respectful relationships with children to create a secure learning environment.
- Using consistent and clear communication to ensure children feel safe and understood.
- Taking time to understand children's personal contexts and experiences.

• Well-Being and Emotional Support

- Prioritising emotional well-being and providing safe spaces for children who need emotional regulation.
- Using social stories, visual prompts, or other aids to support emotional literacy.
- Encouraging participation in activities that build self-esteem and resilience.

• Accessible Environment

- Ensuring classrooms are arranged to minimise sensory overload and distractions.
- Providing alternative seating, sensory aids, or movement breaks where appropriate.

- Ensuring all children can physically access the resources and areas they need.

• **Collaboration and Partnership**
  - Working in partnership with parents/carers as key members of the support team.
  - Engaging with external specialists (e.g., Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists) to seek advice and guidance.
  - Sharing best practices across the school to ensure consistency in supporting SEND learners.

• **Assessment and Feedback**
  - Using formative assessment strategies to regularly check understanding and address misconceptions.
  - Giving specific, positive, and constructive feedback to build confidence.
  - Encouraging self and peer assessment to promote ownership of learning.
  - Fostering a Culture of High Expectations
  - Believing that every child can achieve and celebrating all forms of progress.
  - Encouraging perseverance and resilience through praise and recognition of effort.
  - Setting challenging but achievable goals to stretch all learners.

• **Behaviour for Learning**
  - Using positive behaviour management strategies, tailored to individual needs.
  - Understanding that behaviour is a form of communication, and responding sensitively.
  - Providing clear expectations and using visual or verbal cues to reinforce them.

• **Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**
  - Engaging in regular SEND-focused CPD to stay up-to-date with best practices.
  - Reflecting on practice and seeking feedback to continually improve provision.
  - Sharing expertise and successful strategies with colleagues across the school.