



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITIES POLICY 2025-26

The purpose of this policy document is to outline for parents, guardians, teachers and governors the principles and practice regarding the identification and support of pupils with special educational needs and or disability (SEND) at the college. This policy is in keeping with the college's aims, its teaching and learning policy and its policy on educational inclusion.

In making provision for pupils with special educational needs, the Governing Body, the Principal and members of the teaching and non-teaching staff will have regard to the guidance and procedures set out in the DfE's "[Special Educational Needs Code of Practice](#)", Jan 2015.

Further detailed information about how the needs of pupils with SEND are met can be found in the college's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report (also on the school website).

1 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs and / or disabilities.
- 1.2 To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2015.
- 1.3 To operate a "whole pupil, whole college" approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs and disabilities.
- 1.4 To provide a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDSCO) who will work with the SEND Policy.
- 1.5 To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- 1.6 To work in partnership with parents and guardians, whose views in respect of their child's particular needs will be taken into account in making provision for the pupil's special educational needs and / or disabilities.

All members of staff are required to be familiar with and to act in accordance with the college's policy for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and to work closely with the SENDSCO and other colleagues to ensure that appropriate provision is made for identified pupils. Senior staff and Heads of Department have a particular responsibility to ensure that the policy is implemented effectively and efficiently, and that it serves the best interests of all pupils with SEND.

2 DEFINITIONS

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 the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post -16 institutions*

Special educational needs are categorised into four broad areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical

When identifying and assessing a pupil's needs the college recognises that there is a wide-spectrum of special educational needs which are frequently inter-related. In addition, the college recognises there are also specific needs that usually relate directly to particular types of impairment. The identification process will encompass a whole range of areas including social, physical, emotional and cognitive difficulties, attendance and behaviour.

3 HOW PUPILS ARE IDENTIFIED, AND THEIR NEEDS ASSESSED AND REVIEWED

The Code of Practice outlines a graduated response to meeting individual pupils' needs; recognising that there is a range of special educational needs. High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have SEN and or disabilities. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching.

As such, subject teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class; including pupils with SEN and disabilities. In deciding whether to make special educational provision, the SENDCO should consider all of the information gathered from within the college about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This should include high quality and accurate formative assessment.

Consideration of whether special educational provision is required should start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents/guardians. This should then help determine the nature of support that is needed and whether it can be provided by the college or whether something different or additional is required.

This information gathering should include an early discussion with the pupil and their parents/guardians. These discussions with parents/guardians will be structured in such a way that they develop a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty, any concerns, agreed outcomes and agreed next steps.

Other means used to help identify pupils who may have special educational needs include:

- performance in the cognitive ability tests taken by all pupils when they join the college;
- Completing Reading Age test at the beginning of Year 7
- the college's internal continuous assessment system which can monitor an individual's progress across different subjects relative to their peers;
- records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality.

The Code of Practice is clear that 'slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN'. So, performance in cognitive ability tests, Reading Age tests and college assessments will help to inform whether **further** specialist assessment should take place to identify an SEN need. This evidence on its own is not sufficient to add a student to the SEN list.

The SENDCO will also respond within 4 weeks to enquiries from:

- parents/guardians;
- individual pupils;
- outside agencies, such as CAMHS or Educational Psychology;
- the school nurse and other medical advisors.

4 A GRADUATED APPROACH TO SEND SUPPORT

The Code of Practice outlines a graduated response to responding to pupils' needs, recognising the need to adopt a four-part cycle; through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised. This graduated approach has four distinct stages: Assess, Plan, Do, and Review.

Assess

The SENDCO will consider all of the information gathered from within the college about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This should include high quality and accurate formative assessment. In order to support the assessment process, Subject Specialists will provide clear evidence of adaptations and differentiation and will detail the pupil's response to these adjustments.

Plan

The SENDCO will collate the assessment data in order to plan the appropriate next steps. The planning stage allows for careful consideration of the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment and the views and wishes of the pupil and their parents/guardians.

Do

The SENDCO will use data and intended outcomes to provide the most effective and appropriate intervention.

Review

The SENDCO will collate information from subject specialists and key staff in order to review the impact of the intervention. A review meeting will be convened, where all stakeholders will consider the pupils progress in relation to agreed outcomes. The termly review meeting will enable all stakeholders to consider the appropriate next steps.

This phased approach to SEND allows for a considered approach, careful review and utilises specialist expertise in order to match interventions to the needs of the pupils.

5 MANAGING PUPILS' NEEDS ON THE SEND LIST

In line with the four-part cycle, the college adopts a graduated approach to supporting a pupil's learning.

Universal

At the universal level all pupils will receive high quality teaching, differentiated for individual needs. Details of pupil's individual needs will be disseminated to subject teachers via their individual student profiles and SEN forums; enabling them to make reasonable adjustments. This adjustment is the first step to responding to pupils with SEND and assists teachers with the cycle of planning, assessment and evaluation that takes account of the abilities, aptitudes and interests of all pupils. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. As such, subject teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class; including pupils with SEND.

Targeted

Should a pupil not make the expected progress within the universal arrangements; it may be appropriate to consider making additional short term special educational provision to remove or reduce any obstacles to their learning. This takes the form of a graduated four-part approach of a) **assessing** a child's needs, b) **planning** the most effective and appropriate intervention, c) **providing** this intervention and d) **reviewing** the impact on the child's progress towards individual learning outcomes.

Specialist

In a minority of cases it may be necessary to seek specialist advice and regular long-term support from external specialist professionals. In seeking the advice of external professionals, the college will seek to enhance educational opportunities and to plan for the best possible learning outcomes. This may include referrals to the Educational Psychologist, the Speech and Language Therapist, Specialist Teachers and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). The college will need to prioritise referrals to these services.

6 SEN REGISTER AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS REGISTER

Placement of students on the SEN/Additional Needs register

The college will make a distinction between those students who need to be placed on the SEN register and those who need to be placed on the Additional Needs register.

According to the SEN Code of Practice, "a pupil has SEN 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."

The college needs to be able to correctly distinguish between pupils who are of lower ability or have a gap in their learning, and those whose needs are not ordinarily and consistently met through Quality First Teaching. The Code of Practice is clear that 'slow progress and low attainment do not necessarily mean that a child has SEN'.

The SEN register allows the college to track pupils that require provision that is specific and **additional and different to that offered to all pupils** in order to reach the expected standard.

Criteria for SEN register

- Students with an EHCP (for cognition and learning or health reasons)
- Students with a specific SEN diagnosis whose needs are met through Quality First Teaching plus other support/intervention
- Students being assessed and awaiting a SEN diagnosis
- Any student who is fully dependent on TA support, even if they have no SEN diagnosis
- Students with a SEMH need which is specifically ADHD or ADD or has a significant impact on their ability to engage/make progress academically.
- Students who work with particular external professionals e.g. Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist

An Additional Needs register allows the college to keep track of pupils who have additional needs, but who **don't require specific or additional support to reach age-related expectations as a result of SEND.**

Criteria for Additional Needs register

- Students with EAL
- Students with medical needs but no EHCP
- Students with a SEN diagnosis of MLD who can work independently from TA
- Students with a SEN diagnosis of MLD whose needs are met through Quality First Teaching and don't therefore require specific or additional support to reach age-related expectations
- Students with SEMH needs which is not ADHD or ADD (such as anxiety/depression/bereavement)
- Students who work with CAHMS/mental health professionals outside of college
- Students with a combination of low reading scores and low baseline scores in year 7s
- Students entitled to Access Arrangements
- Students with behavioural issues
- Looked-after children

Monitoring the students on the Additional Needs Register allows the college to identify any students who may require an assessment of their needs or an intervention which is additional and different to what they currently receive. This could then lead to students being moved on to the SEN register.

The criteria above are intended to guide the SEN department in making decisions but there may be some exceptions. This is why it is necessary to make decisions about placement of students on either register on a case by case basis.

Timeline for reviewing the SEN register

The SEN register needs to be reviewed regularly to ensure it is accurate and fit for purpose. Staff will be invited to review the provision and strategies outlined on individual student profiles at two key points in the year and asked to suggest changes to profiles to ensure best practice is shared. Parents will be informed if their child is placed on or removed from the SEN register (or Additional Needs register) and the reason for this. Staff will also be consulted on additions and removals to ensure full transparency.

7 EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS (EHC)

Education Health and Care Plans (EHC) replaced statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN) from September 2014. *The plans require local authorities and healthcare services to join-up their services and plan for the whole range of needs of individual pupils.*

8 SUPPORTING PUPILS WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS

Some pupils at the college have medical conditions that are severe, long term and affect their ability to function. The college recognises that pupils with long term medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some pupils with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the college will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010. The SENDCO will liaise with the School Nurse in order to facilitate the creation of Individual Health Care Plans for pupils with medical needs. These students will also be placed on the Additional Needs register.

Some pupils may also have special educational needs and /or disabilities (SEND) and may *need* an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision. In this case the SENDCO will follow the guidelines as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014. These students will be placed on the SEN register.

9 COORDINATION OF THE PROVISION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The SENDCO and SEND Support Officer are responsible for coordinating the day-to-day provision for pupils with special educational needs. The SENDCO has an important role to play with the Principal and governing body, in determining the strategic development of SEND policy and provision in the college.

The key responsibilities of the SENDCO and SEND support officer in respect of pupils with special educational needs include:

- overseeing the day-to-day operation of the college's SEND policy;
- co-ordinating provision for children with SEND;
- liaising with the School Nurse to facilitate the creation of Individual Health Plans for pupils with medical needs who do not have an EHC;
- liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher, where a looked after pupil has SEND;
- advising on the graduated approach to providing SEND support;
- ensuring individual student profiles are updated as necessary;
- advising on the deployment of the School's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively;
- liaising with parents of pupils with SEND;
- liaising with primary schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies;
- being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services;
- liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned;
- working under the direction of the Principal and the School Governors to ensure that the college meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.

10 RESOURCES

Staffing costs within the college's overall budget, departmental allowances and the budgets for ICT and the library include an element for special educational needs, including cost associated with identifying pupils with special educational needs and monitoring their progress.

The funding received for a pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC) is used in accordance with the provisions of the EHC. In all cases, additional funding from the college's general budget is used to support pupils with an EHC.

11 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

The provision for pupils with special educational needs is integral to the professional development of staff. The SENDCO has a special role in respect of the provision of professional development for all staff. Other opportunities and arrangements for in-service training include:

- a commitment to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are taken into account in the planning and development of the curriculum and co-curriculum and in any in-service training associated with or arising out of planning and development;
- the provision for pupils with special educational needs is integral to the induction programme for early career teachers;
- newly appointed staff are made aware of the college's special educational needs policy and the procedures arising out of it;
- heads of department are responsible for ensuring that proper provision is made for in-service training at departmental level, in liaison with the SENDCO;
- use is made of professional days for in-service training in respect of special educational needs;

12 THE ROLE PLAYED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents and Guardians of children with special educational needs have a responsibility to work and communicate effectively with the college and any relevant professionals to support their children's education and development. In working with the college, they should communicate any concerns they may have about their child's learning or provision, attend meetings, including routine parent/teacher meetings, at which their child's progress and provision is to be discussed, and fulfil their obligations under the home-school agreement. They are also expected to support and encourage their children to take a full part in and make a full contribution to the life of the college, including its extra-curricular activities. This approach will be reflected in the 'assess, plan, do and review' process; where a parental target will be set and reviewed.

Parents and Guardians should be aware that the local authority has a statutory obligation in respect of making arrangements for parent partnership services. Information about these services is available directly from the local authority and also in the 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report' which is also available on the school website.

13 ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

For many of the pupils at the college, English is not their first language or the first language of their parents. A lack of competence in English must not, as such, be regarded as a special need as understood in the Code of Practice and this policy document. Some students with EAL may be placed on the Additional Needs register for the purpose of extra monitoring and to make teachers aware that these students may need specific differentiation.

However, poor educational progress by a pupil for whom English is a second language (or whose language development may have been delayed because English is a second language of their parents) cannot automatically be attributed solely to their language difficulties and an assessment will be made to identify other possible causes.

14 REVIEW AND REVISION

This governing body will review and where appropriate revise this policy annually.

This policy document should be read in conjunction with the:

- the college's [prospectus](#)
- the SEND information report for parents/guardians
- [policy documents and other information](#) and documents concerning provision at the college

June 2025



Signed:

Date: 25/09/25

Chair of the Curriculum Committee



Signed:

Date: 25/09/25

Chair of the Governing Body

Review Date 2026