



St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy



With God's Guidance We Love, Learn, Respect and Forgive

Part of the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Academy Trust

SEND Policy

Implementation	Whole School / All Staff
Monitoring	Mrs Clair Dedman
Written	January 2026
Signed (Head Teacher)	
Signed (Chair of Governors)	
Review Date	January 2027

SEN Policy

Compliance

This policy complies with the statutory requirements set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0–25 (July 2014) (section 6.79) and has been written with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice 0–25
- School SEN Information Report Regulations
- Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions
- National Curriculum in England
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Teachers' Standards
- The school's Safeguarding Policy
- The school's Accessibility Plan

This policy also reflects current national priorities, including developments outlined in the SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (2023), ensuring that provision for pupils with SEND is inclusive, ambitious and aligned with best practice.

The development of this policy was informed through collaboration with SENCOs across the St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Academy Trust, alongside consultation with SEN governors, staff, parents and pupils. This ensures that the policy reflects both statutory requirements and the lived experience of the school community.

At St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) is Mrs Stack.

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The SENCO is a qualified teacher and a member of the senior leadership team. The SENCO has strategic responsibility for the day-to-day operation of SEND provision, in line with Chapter 6 of the SEND Code of Practice (2014).

Aim

At St Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we are committed to using our best endeavours to provide a high-quality, inclusive education for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We aim to ensure that all pupils:

- Achieve their best academically, socially and emotionally
- Become confident individuals, able to lead fulfilling lives
- Are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future life
- Develop an understanding of, and respect for, the fundamental values of British society, rooted in our Catholic ethos

We have the highest aspirations for all pupils. We believe that **every teacher is a teacher of every child**, including those with SEND, and that all pupils are entitled to access an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum through effective adaptations and inclusive teaching approaches.

We are committed to creating a fully inclusive school community in which:

- All pupils feel valued, respected and safe
- Barriers to learning are identified early and addressed through appropriate adaptations
- Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life

We work in close partnership with parents and carers, building relationships based on trust, transparency and consistent communication. This collaborative approach enables us to secure the best possible outcomes for pupils with SEND.

Through high-quality, inclusive teaching, appropriate adaptations, and a strong commitment to inclusion, we strive to ensure that all pupils, regardless of need, can flourish within our school community.

“With God’s Guidance We Love, Learn, Respect and Forgive”

Objectives

To achieve these aims, we will:

1. Establish and maintain a fully inclusive school environment that actively promotes equality, eliminates discrimination and ensures all pupils feel safe, valued and able to flourish.
2. Respond to learners in ways that take account of their individual needs, strengths and life experiences. We adopt an inclusive approach that focuses on removing barriers to learning through effective adaptations, rather than viewing difficulties as deficits within the child.
3. Identify pupils’ special educational needs at the earliest opportunity and implement appropriate, evidence-based provision and adaptations to support strong long-term outcomes.
4. Work in close partnership with parents and carers, ensuring they are fully involved in decision-making and are provided with clear information, guidance and support to enable meaningful participation.
5. Enable pupils to participate in discussions about their learning and support, express their views, and be actively involved in decisions that affect them, developing their confidence and independence as effective self-advocates.
6. Work collaboratively with a range of external agencies and professionals to provide targeted, specialist support where needed.
7. Provide ongoing support, advice and high-quality professional development for all staff, enabling them to deliver inclusive teaching and make effective adaptations to meet the diverse needs of all pupils.
8. Ensure the school has a qualified Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), who leads and manages the day-to-day operation of SEND provision, including the coordination of support for pupils with SEN and those with

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

The Headteacher, SENCO, all staff, the Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) SEND team, and the Governing Body will work within the guidance set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0–25 (2014), ensuring that statutory duties are met and provision is continually reviewed and improved.

Identification of Special Educational Needs

A pupil has special educational needs (SEN) where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision to be made for them. This is provision that is additional to or different from that normally available to pupils of the same age. SEN may be identified at an early age; however, for some pupils, needs may become evident over time as they develop.

Identification of SEN is embedded within the school's inclusive approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils.

Class teachers are responsible for the ongoing assessment of all pupils and will:

- Assess each pupil's skills and levels of attainment on entry, building on information from previous settings
- Make regular and accurate assessments of progress
- Identify pupils who may require additional support or adaptations to enable them to make expected progress

Where a pupil's progress is a cause for concern, this may be characterised by progress which:

- Is significantly slower than that of peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or improve upon the pupil's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the pupil and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

Progress will also be considered in areas beyond academic attainment, including wider development, social, emotional and mental health needs.

Broad Areas of Need

The school recognises the four broad areas of need as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 0–25:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and Learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/or Physical

These areas provide a framework for identifying need; however, they are not used to categorise pupils. In practice, pupils may have needs that span more than one area, and these may change over time.

The purpose of identification is to inform the most appropriate provision and adaptations required to support the pupil, taking a holistic view of the child.

Other Factors Impacting Progress

The school recognises that there are several factors that may impact on progress and attainment but are not, in themselves, indicators of SEN. These include:

- Disability (where reasonable adjustments may be required under the Equality Act 2010)
- Attendance and punctuality
- Health and welfare
- English as an additional language (EAL)
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium funding
- Being a looked-after child
- Being a child of a service family

These factors are carefully considered as part of a pupil's profile, and appropriate support and inclusive adaptations are put in place where needed.

The Graduated Approach to SEN Support

The identification of need and the adaptation of teaching to support pupils is an integral part of high-quality, inclusive classroom practice for all pupils.

The school has a rigorous and systematic approach to monitoring pupil progress through termly pupil progress meetings. This enables early identification of pupils who may not be making expected progress or who require additional support or adaptations to access learning.

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Planning and delivering high-quality, inclusive teaching
- Making appropriate adaptations to meet the needs of all pupils
- Implementing timely and targeted support where required
- Working closely with parents/carers to develop a shared understanding of strengths, needs and next steps

Where a pupil's needs are persistent, the class teacher will complete an initial concerns process and consult with the SENCO. Parents/carers will be involved at this stage, and the views of the pupil will be sought where appropriate.

If it is identified that a pupil requires provision that is additional to or different from that ordinarily available, the pupil will be placed on the school's SEND register at **SEN Support**. Parents/carers will be formally informed when this occurs.

The class teacher remains responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupil, including when support is delivered by a teaching assistant or through targeted interventions.

Assess – Plan – Do – Review

SEN Support follows a cyclical process known as the Graduated Approach:

- **Assess**
The class teacher and SENCO gather a clear understanding of the pupil's needs through assessment data, observations, and input from parents/carers and the pupil.
- **Plan**
Outcomes are agreed, and appropriate support, strategies and adaptations are identified. This may include targeted interventions or adjustments to classroom practice.
- **Do**
The class teacher remains responsible for implementing the agreed support. Additional provision may be delivered by trained staff under the direction of the teacher.
- **Review**

The effectiveness of support is reviewed regularly (at least termly), considering progress data, pupil voice and parental feedback. Outcomes are evaluated and provision is refined accordingly.

This process ensures that support is responsive, evidence-based and increasingly personalised over time.

Where pupils continue to make less than expected progress, despite high-quality teaching and well-targeted support, the school will consider involving external specialists. This may include professionals commissioned by the school or through external services.

Parents/carers will always be involved in decisions to involve external agencies, and their consent will be sought. The SENCO will coordinate referrals and ensure that advice is clearly communicated, implemented and reviewed.

Examples of external support may include:

- Educational Psychologists
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Specialist teachers (e.g. hearing, vision, physical needs)
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists
- Autism (ASD) services
- Cognitive and learning support services
- The Diana Service

In some cases, there may be a cost associated with accessing specialist services. This will be met through the school's notional SEND budget and monitored by the SENCO and Headteacher.

Where a pupil has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the school will work in close partnership with the local authority and any named external agencies to ensure that provision is implemented effectively and outcomes are achieved.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Needs Assessment and Plan Process

Where a pupil's needs cannot be met through the resources and provision ordinarily available within the school, the school will work in close partnership with parents/carers to consider whether a request for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment is appropriate.

This decision will be based on:

- Evidence gathered through the graduated approach (Assess–Plan–Do–Review)
- The pupil's progress over time
- The impact of interventions and adaptations already in place
- The level of support required to meet the pupil's needs

The SENCO will lead this process, ensuring that all relevant evidence is collated and that the views of the pupil and their parents/carers are fully included.

Where appropriate, the school may also work within any locally agreed processes (such as additional SEN support planning arrangements) prior to requesting an EHC needs assessment, in line with local authority guidance.

The criteria and processes for requesting an EHC needs assessment are set out by the Local Authority and are available through the Local Offer:

- Leicester Local Offer: <http://www.localofferleicester.org.uk/>
- Leicestershire Local Offer:
http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/children_families/local_offer.htm

If an EHC needs assessment is agreed by the Local Authority, the school will work collaboratively with parents/carers, the pupil and relevant professionals to contribute to the assessment process.

Where an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is issued, the school will:

- Implement the provision specified within the plan
- Work closely with external agencies involved
- Monitor progress towards agreed outcomes
- Review the plan at least annually, in partnership with parents/carers and the pupil

Throughout this process, the school is committed to ensuring that parents/carers are fully informed, supported and involved at every stage, enabling them to understand the process and contribute confidently to decision-making.

Removing Pupils from the SEND Register

In consultation with parents/carers, a pupil may be removed from the SEND register where they have made sustained progress and no longer require provision that is additional to or different from that provided through high-quality, inclusive classroom practice.

This may be appropriate where:

- Progress is in line with, or better than, peers from a similar starting point
- The attainment gap has been significantly reduced or closed
- Wider development (e.g. social or emotional needs) has improved and progress is sustained
- The pupil can access learning successfully through appropriate classroom adaptations

Decisions will be made collaboratively by the class teacher, SENCO, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil. Progress will continue to be monitored to ensure improvements are maintained.

Pupils on the SEND register due to medical needs will remain on the register while support is required.

Supporting Parents/Carers of Children with SEND

The school is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers of pupils with SEND, ensuring they are fully informed, involved and supported.

We will do this by:

- Creating a welcoming, inclusive environment where parents/carers feel listened to and valued
- Providing clear and accessible information about SEND provision
- Ensuring the SENCO is available for meetings by appointment
- Publishing SEND information on the school website and contributing to the Local Offer:
 - Leicester: <http://www.localofferleicester.org.uk/>
 - Leicestershire:
http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/children_families/local_offer.htm

- Communicating regularly and discussing concerns at the earliest opportunity
- Meeting with parents/carers at least three times a year to review progress, outcomes and adaptations
- Providing guidance on how to support learning at home
- Keeping clear records of agreed support and sharing these with parents/carers
- Signposting to additional support, including SENDIASS
- Supporting parents/carers at key points, including transitions and EHC processes
- Using a range of communication methods in line with the school's communication policy
- Seeking and responding to parental feedback to inform ongoing improvements

Supporting Pupil Voice

The school recognises that all pupils have the right to be involved in decisions about their learning and to express their views. We are committed to developing pupils' self-advocacy skills so that they become confident, independent learners who can communicate their needs and take increasing responsibility for their learning and future.

How the school supports pupil voice

We will:

- Support pupils, alongside parents/carers, to develop an understanding of their strengths, needs and the adaptations that help them to learn successfully
- Involve pupils, where appropriate and in an age-appropriate way, in reviewing their progress and contributing to decisions about their support and provision
- Ensure that all staff actively listen to pupils and respond to their views, concerns and aspirations
- Provide additional support at key points, such as transition or when considering an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment
- Enable pupils to contribute meaningfully to their Annual Reviews, for example through attending meetings, sharing their views in writing, or using alternative formats such as recorded presentations
- Seek pupil views regularly through questionnaires, discussions or group activities, and use this feedback to inform improvements to provision and inclusive practice

Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

The school recognises that pupils with medical conditions should be fully supported to access education, including school trips and physical education, through appropriate adaptations and inclusive practice.

Some pupils with medical conditions may also be disabled. In such cases, the school will meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments and ensure equal access to learning.

In addition, some pupils with medical conditions may have special educational needs and may be supported through SEN Support or have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, which brings together their education, health and care provision.

The school will work in partnership with parents/carers and relevant professionals to ensure that pupils' medical needs are understood and appropriately supported.

Further details of the school's arrangements for supporting pupils with medical

conditions are outlined in the school's **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy**.

Monitoring and Evaluation of SEND

The school regularly monitors and evaluates the quality and effectiveness of provision for all pupils, including those with SEND, to ensure that support is inclusive, well-targeted and has a positive impact on outcomes.

This is achieved through:

- Analysis of pupil progress and attainment data
- Work scrutiny and review of learning in books
- Lesson observations and monitoring of classroom practice, including the use of adaptations
- Evaluation of interventions and provision mapping
- Pupil voice and parent/carer feedback

The impact of SEND provision is reviewed termly and informs future planning, ensuring that support remains responsive to pupils' needs.

The SENCO works closely with the Senior Leadership Team to evaluate provision and drive continuous improvement.

The SEND Governor has a strategic role in monitoring SEND provision and will review the school's self-evaluation, relevant data (including ASP where appropriate), and the effectiveness of this policy, reporting findings to the Governing Body.

Training and Development

The school is committed to ensuring that all staff have the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver high-quality, inclusive teaching and make effective adaptations to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND.

Training needs are identified through the school's self-evaluation processes and ongoing monitoring of teaching and learning.

All staff, including teachers and support staff, receive appropriate induction on appointment. This includes guidance from the SENCO on the school's SEND systems, inclusive practice, and the needs of individual pupils.

Ongoing professional development is provided to ensure that staff are equipped to:

- Deliver inclusive, high-quality teaching
- Implement effective adaptations within the classroom
- Support a range of SEND needs

The SENCO regularly attends local authority and Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) network meetings, as well as relevant training and joint professional development opportunities, to ensure that SEND provision reflects current guidance and best practice. This knowledge is then shared with staff to support continuous improvement across the school.

Funding for SEND and Allocation of Resources

The school's core budget is used to provide high-quality, inclusive teaching for all pupils, including those with SEND. In addition, the school receives a notional SEND budget to support pupils who require provision that is additional to or different from that ordinarily available.

This funding is used to:

- Provide targeted interventions and support
- Implement appropriate adaptations within the classroom
- Deploy staff effectively to meet pupils' needs

The school is expected to fund up to £6,000 of provision for individual pupils with SEND from its notional SEND budget. Where a pupil requires provision that exceeds this level, the school may apply to the local authority for additional (top-up) funding from the high needs block.

Where appropriate, the school may also use Pupil Premium funding to support pupils who have SEND and are eligible, ensuring that provision is well-matched to their needs and promotes improved outcomes.

The SENCO, in consultation with the Headteacher and class teachers, is responsible for planning and monitoring the use of SEND funding. This includes maintaining a provision map which outlines:

- The support in place for pupils with SEND
- How resources are allocated
- The impact and cost-effectiveness of provision

Provision is reviewed regularly to ensure that resources are used efficiently and that support remains responsive to pupils' needs.

Roles and Responsibilities:

SENCO

The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) plays a key strategic role in leading and managing SEND provision across the school, in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2014).

The SENCO's responsibilities include:

- Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy
- Coordinating provision for pupils with SEND to ensure it is inclusive, effective and responsive to need
- Supporting staff in implementing the graduated approach and making appropriate adaptations within the classroom
- Advising on the effective use of the school's SEND budget and resources
- Working closely with parents/carers to ensure they are fully informed and involved in decision-making
- Liaising with the relevant Designated Teacher where a looked-after pupil has SEND
- Acting as a key point of contact for external agencies, including the local authority and support services

- Working collaboratively with early years providers, other schools, and a range of professionals including educational psychologists and health and social care services
- Supporting transition by liaising with next providers to ensure continuity of provision
- Working with the Headteacher and Governing Body to ensure the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensuring that accurate and up-to-date records are maintained for all pupils with SEND

Governing Body and Headteacher

The Governing Body, in line with the SEND Information Regulations (2014), will ensure that up-to-date information about the implementation of this policy is published on the school's website. This information will be reviewed annually and updated as required. A named SEND Governor is appointed to oversee the school's arrangements for pupils with SEND and to ensure that the Governing Body is fully informed about how the school is meeting its statutory responsibilities.

The Headteacher, SENCO and Governing Body work together to:

- Establish a clear understanding of the resources available to support pupils with SEND
- Ensure a strategic and inclusive approach to SEND provision across the school
- Monitor the effectiveness and impact of provision, including the use of funding such as the notional SEND budget and Pupil Premium

The Headteacher will ensure that the SENCO is supported to carry out their role effectively. This includes:

- Providing sufficient time and resources
- Ensuring access to administrative support
- Enabling time for strategic leadership, monitoring and coordination of provision

Reviewing This Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it reflects current legislation, guidance and best practice.

The views of pupils with SEND and their parents/carers will be sought as part of this process, including through questionnaires and consultation, to inform ongoing improvements.

Accessibility

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with disabilities, can access the full range of educational opportunities through inclusive practice and appropriate adaptations.

In line with the Equality Act 2010, the school maintains an Accessibility Plan, which outlines how access to the curriculum, the physical environment and information will be improved over time. This plan is available on request.

Complaints

Any concerns or complaints relating to SEND provision should be raised in the first

instance with the class teacher or SENCO.

Further information can be found in the school's Complaints Policy.

Bullying

The school is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all pupils. Any concerns regarding bullying, including those involving pupils with SEND, will be addressed in line with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.

