



St Francis Catholic Primary School

Special Educational Needs Policy (SEN)

Policy Written: October 2023

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School Mission Statement

'I am a sign of God's love'

At St Francis we love, learn and grow in the footsteps of Jesus and are active signs of God's love through praying, respecting and serving others.

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STATEMENT OF INTENT

This policy outlines the framework for St Francis Catholic Primary School to meet its duties and obligations to provide a high quality education to all of its pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and / or disabilities.

St Francis Catholic Primary School therefore intends to work with Walsall Local authority and within the following principles, which underpin this policy:

- The involvement of children, parents and young people in decision making.
- The identification of children and young people's needs.
- Collaboration between education, health and social care services to provide support.
- High quality provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.
- Greater choice and control for young people and parents over their support.

1. Legal framework

This policy will have due regard to legislation, including, but not limited to:

- Children and Families Act 2014 (and related regulations).
- Health and Social Care Act 2012.
- Equality Act 2010 and School (2014)
- Mental Capacity Act 2005.
- Children's Act 1989.

It will also take into account statutory and non-statutory related guidance, including, but not limited to:

- SEN Code of Practice 0-25 (2015)
- SEND Regulation (2014)
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2019)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children.

2. Definitions

The law states that a child has a special educational need if he / she has a:

- Significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- Disability or health condition which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

3. Areas of special educational need

St Francis Catholic Primary School will make provision for pupils with the following kinds of need:

- Speech, Language, Communication Needs (SLCN).
- Cognition and Learning (C&L).
- Social, Emotional Mental Health (SEMH).
- Physical and sensory:
 - Hearing Impaired (HI)
 - Visually Impaired (VI)
 - Multi-Sensory Impairment
 - Physical Needs
 - Medical Needs

4. Admissions

4.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will ensure it meets its duties under the Schools Admissions Code of Practice by:

- 4.1.1. Adopting fair practices and arrangements in accordance with the Schools Admission Code for the admission of children without an EHC plan.
- 4.1.2. Considering applications from parents of children who have SEN but do not have an EHC plan.
- 4.1.3. Not refusing admission for a child who has SEN but does not have an EHC plan because the school does not feel able to cater for those needs.
- 4.1.4. Not refusing admission for a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. The governing body has a responsibility to:

- 5.1.1. Identify, assess and make SEN provision for all children and young people with SEN, whether or not they have an EHC plan.
- 5.1.2. Use their best endeavours to secure the special educational provision called for by a child or young person's SEN.
- 5.1.3. Designate an appropriate member of staff (SENCO) as having responsibility for co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN.
- 5.1.4. Appoint a designated teacher for 'looked after' children where appropriate.
- 5.1.5. Make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to help alleviate any substantial disadvantage they experience because of their disability.

- 5.1.6. Take necessary steps to ensure that pupils with disabilities are not discriminated against, harassed or victimised.
- 5.1.7. Publish accessibility plans setting how they plan to increase access for pupils with disabilities to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information, reviewable every 3 years.

5.2. The Head Teacher has a responsibility to:

- 5.2.1. Ensure that those teaching or working with the pupil are aware of their needs, and have arrangements in place to meet them.
- 5.2.2. Ensure that teachers monitor and review the pupil's progress during the course of the academic year.
- 5.2.3. Cooperate with local authorities during annual EHC plan reviews.
- 5.2.4. Ensure that the SENCO has sufficient time and resources to carry out their functions.
- 5.2.5. Provide the SENCO with sufficient administrative support and time away from teaching to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities in a similar way to other important strategic roles within the school.
- 5.2.6. Regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for pupils at risk of underachievement, as a core part of the school's performance management arrangements.
- 5.2.7. Ensuring that teachers understand the strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and possess knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.

5.3. The SEN Coordinator (SENCO) must:

- 5.3.1. Be a qualified teacher.
- 5.3.2. Attain the National Award in Special Educational Needs Coordination within three years of appointment.
- 5.3.3. Collaborate with the governing body and Head Teacher, as part of the school leadership team, to determine the strategic development of SEN policy and provision in the school.
- 5.3.4. Work with the school governors and the Head Teacher to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010) with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements.
- 5.3.5. Undertake day-to-day responsibility for the operation of SEN policy.
- 5.3.6. Coordinate the specific provision made to support individual children with SEN, including those who have EHC plans.
- 5.3.7. Liaise with the relevant designated teacher where a looked after pupil has SEN.
- 5.3.8. Advise on a graduated approach to providing SEN support.
- 5.3.9. Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- 5.3.10. Liaise with the parents of pupils with SEN.
- 5.3.11. Liaise with Early Years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.

- 5.3.12. Be a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the LA and LA support services.
- 5.3.13. Liaise with the potential future providers of education to ensure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned.
- 5.3.14. Draw up a 1-page profile of the child or young person with SEN, where applicable.
- 5.3.15. Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work closely with staff members, parents, carers, and other agencies, including secondary schools and nursery schools to aid transition times.
- 5.3.16. Be familiar with the provision in the Local Offer and be able to work with professionals providing a support role to the family.
- 5.3.17. Ensure, as far as possible, that pupils with SEN take part in activities of the school together with those who do not have SEN, including on forums.
- 5.3.18. Ensure that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEN up-to-date.
- 5.3.19. Inform the child's parents that SEN provision is being made, where the child does not have an EHC plan.

5.4. Class / subject teachers must:

- 5.4.1. Plan and review support for their pupils with SEN, on a graduated basis, in collaboration with parents, the SENCO and, where appropriate, the pupil themselves.
- 5.4.2. Set high expectations for every pupil and aim to teach them the full curriculum, whatever their prior attainment.
- 5.4.3. Use appropriate assessment to set targets which are deliberately ambitious.
- 5.4.4. Plan lessons to address potential areas of difficulty and to ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.
- 5.4.5. To share information with other colleagues about their children with SEN.

6. Involving pupils and parents in decision making

- 6.1. Effective planning should help parents, children and young people with SEN express their needs, wishes and goals, and should:
 - 6.1.1. Focus on the child or young person as an individual, not their SEN label.
 - 6.1.2. Be easy for children, young people and their parents to understand and use clear ordinary language and images, rather than professional jargon.
 - 6.1.3. Highlight the child or young person's strengths and capacities.
 - 6.1.4. Enable the child or young person, and those who know them best, to say what they have done, what they are interested in and what outcomes they are seeking in future.
 - 6.1.5. Tailor support to the needs of the individual.
 - 6.1.6. Organise assessments to minimise demands on families.
 - 6.1.7. Bring together relevant professionals to discuss and agree together the overall approach.

7. Joint commissioning, planning, and delivery

7.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will collaborate with the local authority in the exercise of its duty to work together with health and social care providers by:

7.1.1. Identifying improved system outcomes in consultation with pupils and their parents, taking into account:

- Prevention.
- Early identification / recognition.
- How pupils and their families will be able to access services.
- How transitions between life stages and settings will be managed, including from early years to primary education and primary to secondary.
- How provision and support services will enable pupils to prepare for their future adult life.
- Using Right Help, Right Time model.

8. Funding

8.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will allocate the appropriate amount of core per-pupil funding and notional SEN budget outlined in the local offer for the SEN provision of its pupils.

8.2. Personal budgets are allocated from the local authority's high needs funding block and St Francis Catholic primary School will continue to make SEN provision from its own budgets, even if a pupil has an EHC plan.

9. Local offer

9.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will cooperate generally with the local authority and local partners in the development and review of the local offer.

10. Identification

10.1. To identify pupils with SEN, St Francis Catholic Primary School will:

10.1.1. Assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry.

10.1.2. Make regular assessments of all pupils to ensure that the intervention:

- Ensures that the child's progress is similar to that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- Matches or betters the child's previous rate of progress.
- Closes the attainment gap between the child and their peers.
- Prevents the attainment gap growing wider.

10.2. The school will provide extra support to pupils falling behind or making inadequate progress given their age and starting point.

- 10.3. Assess whether a pupil has a significant learning difficulty where pupils continue to make inadequate progress, despite high-quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness.

11. Graduated approach

- 11.1. St Francis Catholic primary School will, once a potential SEN has been identified, employ the graduated approach to meeting the pupil's needs, including:

11.1.1. Establishing a clear **assessment** of the pupil's needs.

11.1.2. **Planning** with the pupil's parents, the interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development and behaviour, along with a clear date for review.

11.1.3. **Implementing** the interventions, with support of the SENCO.

11.1.4. **Reviewing** the effectiveness of the interventions and making any necessary revisions.

12. Targeted Support

- 12.1. The interventions can be implemented through targeted support where a pupil:

12.1.1. Makes little or no progress when teaching approaches are targeted specifically at a child's identified areas of weakness.

12.1.2. Shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas.

12.1.3. Presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the positive behaviour management techniques employed by the school.

12.1.4. Has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment.

12.1.5. Has communication and / or interaction difficulties, and continues to make little or no progress, despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

13. Specialist Support

- 13.1. The relevant teacher or SENCO, in consultation with parents, will talk with the parents about seeking advice from external support services, if a pupil:

13.1.1. Continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period.

13.1.2. Continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age.

13.1.3. Continues to have difficulty in developing literacy and mathematical skills.

13.1.4. Has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme.

13.1.5. Has sensory or physical needs, and requires specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service.

13.1.6. Has an ongoing communication or interaction difficulty that impedes the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning.

14. Assessment

- 14.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will, in consultation with the pupil's parents, request a statutory assessment of SEN where the pupil's needs cannot be met through the resources normally available within the school.
- 14.2. The school will meet its duty to respond to any request for information relating to a statutory assessment, to the local authority, within 6 weeks of receipt.
- 14.3. If the decision is taken not to issue an EHC plan, the school will consider and implement the recommendations of feedback from the local authority, regarding how the pupil's outcomes can be met through the schools existing provision.

15. Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans

- 15.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will meet its duty to respond to the local authority within 15 days, if it is named on a pupil's EHC plan.
- 15.2. The school will admit any child that names the school in an EHC plan in consultation with and support from the Local authority.
- 15.3. The school will ensure that all those teaching or working with a child named in an EHC plan, are aware of the pupil's needs and that arrangements are in place in to meet them.
- 15.4. The school will request a re-assessment of an EHC plan at least 6 months following an initial assessment, if a pupil's need significantly change.

16. Reviewing an EHC plan

- 16.1. St Francis Catholic primary School will:
 - 16.1.1. Cooperate to ensure an annual review meeting takes place, including convening the meeting on behalf of the local authority if requested.
 - 16.1.2. Ensure that sufficient arrangements are put in place at the school to host the annual review meeting.
 - 16.1.3. Seek advice and information about the pupil prior to the annual review meeting from all parties invited.
 - 16.1.4. Send any advice and information gathered to all those invited at least two weeks prior to the annual review meeting.
 - 16.1.5. Cooperate with the local authority during annual reviews.
 - 16.1.6. Prepare and send invitations within 2 weeks of the meeting.

17. Complaints Procedure

17.1. **Stage one** – Complaint made to a member of staff or SENCo

17.2 The member of staff can discuss the complaint with the SENCO or Head Teacher.

17.3 The complainant and the relevant member of staff should discuss the issue in a respectful and informal manner to seek a mutual resolution.

17.4 If an appropriate resolution cannot be sought at this level, or if the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome following the initial discussions, the complainant may wish to proceed to the next level of the procedure.

17.5. **Stage two** – Complaint made to the Head Teacher

17.6 Stage two of the process will be completed within 15 school days. Where the situation is recognised as complex, and it is deemed to be unable to be resolved within this timescale, the Head Teacher will contact the complainant to inform them of the revised target date via a written notification.

17.7 An appointment with the Head Teacher should be made, as soon as reasonably practical, in order to avoid any possible worsening of the situation.

17.8 If the complaint is against the Head Teacher, the complainant will initially need to write, in confidence, to the chair of the governing body. The chair will seek to resolve the issue informally before moving directly to stage three of the procedure.

17.9 In terms of a complaint being made against a member of staff, the Head Teacher will discuss the issue with the staff member in question. Where necessary, the Head Teacher will conduct interviews with any relevant parties, including witnesses and children, and take statements from those involved.

17.10. All discussions shall be recorded by the Head Teacher and findings and resolutions will be communicated to the complainant either verbally or in writing.

17.11. Once all facts are established, the Head Teacher shall contact the complainant in writing with an explanation of the decision.

17.12. Any further action St Francis Catholic Primary School plans to take to resolve the issue will be explained to the complainant in writing.

17.13. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome suggested, the procedure will progress to stage three.

17.14. **Stage three** – Complaints Appeal Panel (CAP)

17.15. Following receipt of a stage two outcome, the complaint should be made in writing to the chair of governors within 10 school days.

17.16. Written acknowledgement of the complaint will be made within three school days. This will inform the complainant that a CAP will hear the complaint within 20 school days.

17.17. The chair of governors, or another nominated governor, will convene a governing body CAP comprising three members of the governing body.

17.18. If the complainant believes there is likely to be bias in the proceedings, they reserve the right to request an independent panel.

17.19. St Francis Catholic Primary School will consider the request but ultimately the decision is made by the governing body.

17.20. Five days' notice will be given to all parties attending the CAP, including the complainant.

17.21. Prior to the hearing, the chair of governors will have written to the complainant informing them of how the review will be conducted. The Head Teacher will also have a copy of this letter.

17.22. At the hearing, all participants will be given the opportunity to put their case across and discuss any issues.

17.23. The CAP will consider issues raised in the original complaint and any issues which have been highlighted during the complaints procedure.

17.24. The meeting should allow for:

- The complainant to explain their complaint and the Head Teacher to explain the reasons for their decision.
- The complainant to question the Head Teacher, and vice versa, about the complaint.
- Any evidence, including witnesses who have been prior approved by the chair of the CAP, to be questioned.
- Members of the CAP to question both the complainant and the Head Teacher.
- Final statements to be made by both parties involved.

17.25 The complainant will receive a written response explaining the final outcome within 15 school days. This letter will also explain whether there are any further rights of appeal and to whom they need to be addressed.

18. SEN and Disability Tribunal

18.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will meet any request to attend a SEND Tribunal and explain any departure from its duties and obligations under the SEN Code of Practice.

19. Data and record keeping

19.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will:

- 19.1.1. Include details of SEN, outcomes, teaching strategies and the involvement of specialists, as part of its standard system to monitor the progress, behaviour and development of all pupils.
- 19.1.2. Record details or additional or different SEN provision.

20. Confidentiality

20.1. St Francis Catholic Primary School will not disclose any EHC plan without the consent of the pupil's parents with the exception of disclosure:

- 20.1.1. To the SEN and Disability Tribunal when parents appeals and to the Secretary of State if a complaint is made under the Education Act 1996.
- 20.1.2. On the order of any court for the purpose of any criminal proceedings.
- 20.1.3. For the purposes of investigations of maladministration under the Local Government Act 1974.
- 20.1.4. To enable any authority to perform duties arising from the Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986 or from the Children Act relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- 20.1.5. To Ofsted inspection teams as part of their inspections of schools and local authorities.
- 20.1.6. To any person in connection with the pupil's application for disabled students allowance in advance of taking up a place in higher education.
- 20.1.7. To the principal (or equivalent position) of the institution at which the pupil is intending to start higher education.