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Special Educational Needs Policy

Definition of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (DfE, July 2014) 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 him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.”

The needs for all children with special educational needs, fall under four broad areas:

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

Children with SEN may have particular needs relating to any one of these areas, or a combination of these areas. This policy aims to address the needs of these children.

Although there are acknowledged links - in some instances - with children who have English as an Additional Language (EAL), this is a separate area of provision and is, accordingly, addressed in a different policy document. Children with EAL should not be regarded as having SEN, although children with EAL may also have SEN.

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 - that is “...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this policy are:

- to create an environment that meets the special educational needs of each child
- to ensure that the special educational needs of children are identified, assessed and provided for as early as possible
- to make clear the expectations of all partners in the provision for children with SEN and that all partners work together effectively
- to ensure a varied and challenging curriculum is provided which is accessible to all and helps individual learners to fulfil their full potential.

Identification, Assessment and Provision

At St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School we recognise the importance of identifying special educational needs as early as possible to ensure appropriate support is put in place. In order to do this we follow steps to identify, assess and provide for the needs of any children who may have special educational needs. This process is outlined below:

Step 1

Every child's education will be planned for by the classteacher and differentiated accordingly to suit the child's individual needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or learning support assistants in class. If a child is not making the expected progress despite this general class differentiation the classteacher will reflect on your child's learning using our 'Class Action' document format to consider whether they may need additional support and/or whether adjustments need to be made to the learning environment.

Step 2

Further information will be gathered through appropriate assessments and observation and your child's learning will be monitored closely, comparing their progress in all areas to their peers. The SENCO and classteacher will consider the information gathered in relation to discussions with the parents and the child, and decide whether the child needs support that is different to or additional to that provided to the rest of their peers. If additional or different support is needed then they will start receiving 'SEN Support'. Their progress and provision will continue to be monitored and reviewed, and if necessary external agencies may be contacted to offer specialist advice or assessments. The classteacher and/or SENCO will meet termly to discuss progress with parents.

Step 3

Most children's needs will be met through this 'SEN Support'. However, if, despite taking relevant and purposeful action to meet the needs of a child, they have not made expected progress, we will discuss with the parents the possibility of requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. If, after discussion, we decide to request an EHC assessment the local authority will decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan. The purpose of an EHC plan is to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

Admission Arrangements

The admission procedure for any child is outlined in the school prospectus. In certain cases, such as with regard to a child with a severe physical disability, special arrangements will be made before the child's admission. Provision for children with SEN is a matter for the school as a whole. We welcome all children to our school and endeavour to ensure that appropriate provision is made to cater for their needs. All children with SEN play a full part in the daily life of the school and are encouraged to

join in all activities. Prior to starting school, parents of children with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) will be invited to discuss the provision that can be made to meet their child's identified needs. Children with EHCPs are admitted into school and fully integrated, unless it would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, and there are no reasonable steps that can be taken to prevent the incompatibility. Every endeavour is made for children with EHCPs to be admitted to the school of their choice.

Allocation of Resources

The Headteacher and SENCO are responsible for the operational management of the specified and agreed resourcing for special educational needs provision within the school, including the provision for children with EHCPs. The Headteacher informs the governing body of how funding allocated to support special educational needs has been employed.

Responsibility

Provision for children with special educational needs is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the governing body, the school's Headteacher, the SENCO and all the other members of staff have important day-to-day responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of all teachers to identify and meet the child's needs. It is the SENCO's responsibility to support, liaise and advise teachers and other members of the staff in identifying and meeting the needs of children with special educational needs. Roles and responsibilities with regard to SEN are designated in the following way:

Headteacher:

- to allocate roles and responsibilities to staff so that special needs are met
- to liaise with staff, SENCO, support services, parents and children
- to report to governors on the needs of the SEN children within the school
- to be responsible for the organisation of review meetings (usually delegated to the SENCO)
- to ensure that the needs of children with SEN are met within the school.

SENCO:

- to play a key role in the development of SEN policy and provision
- to oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's SEN policy
- to monitor the needs of children with SEN together with the Headteacher and class teachers
- to assist with, and advise on, the teaching and assessment of children with SEN
- to organise annual and termly reviews
- to work collaboratively with class teachers to write support plans and ensure support plans are written and reviewed termly
- to monitor the teaching and learning of children with SEN
- to ensure that the impact of SEN intervention is assessed for each child
- to meet regularly with the Headteacher to discuss changes, individual children, resources and use of time
- to give advice on the level of support and on appropriate resources and strategies to support learning
- to ensure that the school's SEN register is updated regularly
- to make contact with the support services in consultation with the Headteacher and class teachers
- to meet with the Junior SENCO to discuss transition from KS1 to KS2
- to meet with parents and children to discuss support needs and progress
- to annually update the SEN information report

- to lead training on SEN in school as appropriate
- to keep their own skills updated by reading, researching & attending SEN cluster meetings, local authority update meetings, and appropriate related external courses.

Class teachers:

- to identify individual children in their class who may have special educational needs, and discuss these needs with the SENCO and parents
- to complete and review Class Action forms as appropriate, providing copies for the SENCO
- to maintain a dialogue with parents about their child's educational needs, and pass information on to the SENCO and Headteacher as appropriate
- to know which children in their class are on the SEN Register and what stage of provision they are receiving
- to ensure that the Headteacher, SENCO and other colleagues are aware of children's needs
- to maintain a SEN file for their class reflecting this information for each individual child and copies of all relevant support plans
- to write support plans for children with SEN, in collaboration with the SENCO
- to create a one-page profile for children with SEN, in collaboration with the child, SENCO, parents and other supporting adults
- to share outcomes from support plans with children
- to review support plan outcomes with children and appropriate LSAs at least termly to inform new plans, or to provide evidence towards changing their stage of SEN
- to provide a learning environment, and learning experiences, which are appropriate to the needs of the children in their class
- to ensure LSAs are supporting children in their class, as directed
- to ensure information regarding individual children with SEN is passed on to the relevant LSAs working within their classroom
- to provide the SENCO with termly updates of the levels achieved by children with SEN in their class (e.g. EYFS scores, Literacy levels, Numeracy levels, Letters and Sounds data)
- to attend appropriate meetings, training and courses.

Learning Support Assistants:

Under the guidance of the SENCO and or class teacher:

- to carry out activities and learning programmes planned by the class teacher and the SENCO
- to keep records of this work as requested
- to support children in class or by working with individuals and small groups
- to support teachers in reviewing individual plans and targets
- to attend training and courses where appropriate
- to be fully aware of the school's SEN policy.

Governors

- to ensure a named governor has responsibility for supporting the SENCO and keeping up to date with policies, strategies, procedures, etc. through regular visits
- to be involved in developing and monitoring the SEN policy
- to have up to date knowledge about the school's SEN provision, including funding
- to know how equipment and personnel resources are deployed
- to ensure that SEN provision is an integral part of the School Development Plan
- to ensure that financial resources are available to carry out the SEN policy
- to ensure the quality of SEN provision is continually monitored
- to ensure the SEN policy is subject to a regular cycle of monitoring, evaluation and review

- to liaise with the Headteacher, SENCO and staff.

Staff Training

The SENCO must have or complete the National Award for Special Educational Needs Coordination within 3 years of taking on the role, as required by government regulations. The SENCO will also attend regular cluster meetings and local authority SENCO Update meetings to receive updates of current developments in special educational needs.

The SENCO, class teachers, and Learning Support Assistants can attend relevant courses which will keep them updated and skilled in areas applicable to their own and their children's needs. Details of relevant training will be displayed in the staffroom. Training and development of staff will also be delivered by the SENCO through staff meetings, according to the SEN development plan.

Other Agencies

Parents are informed if any outside agency is involved with the support of their child. External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for children with special education needs. This support may be provided by Speech and Language Therapists and Technicians, Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Specialist Teachers and Behaviour Support staff. Children with EHCPs will be given support as stipulated in their EHCP. There are also voluntary organisations supporting SEN. The SENCO collates information on these and parents will be given details of these groups on request or as appropriate.

Partnership with Parents

The school's aim is to develop a partnership where professionals and parents work together in the best interests of the child. The school encourages an active partnership through an on-going dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Class teachers discuss any concerns regarding a child's educational needs with parents, and parents are informed when a teacher considers that a child's needs are significant enough for him/her to be placed on the SEN register. At this point a support plan will be developed for the child, outlining the educational support which will be provided. The school invites parents of children with special educational needs to a meeting each term to discuss and review their child's progress and their support plan. If an appointment cannot be made, a copy of the plan is sent home for parents. The school also informs parents of any outside intervention, such as visits from outside agencies.

The school encourages parents to work with it to help meet their child's needs. This may be by some or all of the following:

- raising awareness of any additional needs their child may have with the school at the earliest opportunity
- supporting their child at home, guided by the suggestions in their support plans
- attending appointments outside school and informing the school where appropriate of the outcomes
- attending reviews in school with school staff and other professionals supporting their child.

The school prospectus contains a summary of the Special Educational Needs Policy. Parents are also welcome to speak to the SENCO at any convenient time.

If parents have a concern they feel has not been noted by the school, or if there is a complaint regarding the SEN provision their child is receiving, they should initially see

the class teacher. The class teacher will then liaise with other staff, so that concerns can be dealt with as soon as possible. If any issues are not resolved, parents should arrange to meet with the SENCO to discuss their concerns. If problems still persist then parents should refer to the latest School Complaints Procedure.

Transition Arrangements

The Early Years Foundation Stage Manager, Headteacher and SENCO arrange visits and talk with staff from feeder pre-schools in the summer term to aid the transition of new children to the school. For children with an EHCP, parents are encouraged to arrange extra visits to the school during the summer term to support transition.

Records, support plans etc. are transferred to the relevant SENCO at the end of a child's time at our school. In addition, year 2 staff meet with year 3 staff from St Thomas of Canterbury Junior School in the summer term, to discuss children in the current year 2 classes, prior to the children transferring to the Junior school in September of that year. The Infant and Junior school SENCOs also meet in the summer term to discuss children transferring to the Junior school. Staff from both schools also arrange extra visits of staff and children between the two schools as appropriate, to support the transition of specific children with special educational needs.

Evaluation and Review

The Headteacher and governors will evaluate the SEN provision through Headteacher's reports and by nominating a named governor for SEN. The school development committee of the governing body reviews this policy annually and considers amendments in the light of the annual review findings. The chairman of that committee reports the outcomes of the review to the full governing body.

The education provided for children with SEN is considered effective when: -

- children with SEN are identified at an early stage and are placed appropriately on the SEN register
- individual needs are carefully assessed
- support plans are agreed and implemented and progress towards outcomes used to inform future learning
- support plans are reviewed regularly and parent and child input is sought and documented
- support and advice from Outside Agencies is used effectively
- resources, including LSA support, are used effectively
- children on the SEN Register achieve as well as or better than similar children nationally.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the SENCO, in consultation with the Headteacher, teaching staff and governors. This policy will next be reviewed in October 2018.

Adelle Taylor
Special Educational Needs Coordinator
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