



St Christopher  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# St Christopher Primary School

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN) Policy

**Approved by:** Governors  
**Updated:** December 2025

## Introduction

St Christopher Primary School is committed to providing a high-quality, inclusive education for all pupils. This policy sets out how we identify and support pupils who experience barriers to learning, particularly those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEN), so they can achieve well and thrive.

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## Rationale

This policy is written in line with the current Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN) Code of Practice and associated legislation. The school will update practice and documentation in line with any future statutory changes.

We believe every child has the right to access a broad and balanced curriculum and to achieve their full potential. Our ethos promotes equality of opportunity, values individuality and celebrates diversity.

We prioritise:

- high-quality, inclusive teaching first
- a calm, structured environment that enables pupils to succeed
- targeted, proportionate support where needed

Where additional needs arise, we work in partnership with specialist SEN services, parents/carers and when appropriate with pupils to remove barriers and secure progress.

We also make coordinated arrangements for pupils with medical conditions through Individual Healthcare Plans where needed.

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## Objectives

We aim to:

- identify pupils with SEN as early as possible
  - ensure pupils receive the support they need
  - assess, plan, provide and review support
  - involve pupils in decisions affecting them
  - work in genuine partnership with parents and carers
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## Definition of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Under the Children and Families Act and SEN Regulations, a child has SEN if they have:

a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

A learning difficulty means a child has:

- **significantly** greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age, or
- a disability that makes it significantly harder to use the facilities provided in school.

*Special educational provision* means provision that is additional to or different from that provided for most pupils.

Some children with SEN may also meet the Equality Act (2010) definition of disability — a long-term and substantial adverse effect on day-to-day activities.

Children are not considered to have a learning difficulty purely because English is an additional language.

## SENCO

St Christopher Primary School has a designated, qualified SENCo responsible for leading and coordinating SEN provision.

Current SENCO Team: Mrs Robinson, Mrs Evans, Mrs Pameley and Miss Small. From September 2026: Miss Knighton will be the named SENCO.

## Progress and the Identification of SEN

When considering SEN, we look not only at accessibility and attainment but also at progress over time.

A child may be below age-related expectations but still making progress because of high-quality teaching and inclusive classroom strategies. In such cases, SEN identification may not be appropriate.

A pupil is likely to be identified with SEN by the school when, despite high-quality inclusive teaching, reasonable adjustments and interventions, they:

- continue to be below age related expectations and make significantly less progress than peers over 18 months to two years.
- fail to close gaps over time, or
- require specific provision that is additional to or different from our normal offer in daily lessons, small, focussed groups and in class

This ensures identification is proportionate, evidence-based and accurate.

Our staff recognise that children may consciously or unconsciously adjust, hide, or manage their behaviour, communication, emotions, or learning strategies in order to meet the expectations of a particular environment, such as school. To a degree, this reflects a normal life skill that most people develop as part of everyday social interaction and learning. This can include copying peers, suppressing signs of difficulty, avoiding tasks that feel challenging, or relying on routines and adult prompts to maintain participation.

In the context of special educational needs, masking may sometimes make underlying difficulties less visible in certain settings. However, the presence or absence of masking alone does not determine whether a child has SEN. Schools identify SEN based on clear, consistent evidence over time that a pupil has significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, or a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for others, in line with the SEN Code of Practice. School staff observe pupils across lessons, routines, and unstructured times to understand how consistently a child can access learning, manage social interaction, and respond to demands, and whether these differences are sustained, significant, and impacting on progress or wellbeing.

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## **Attendance and Consideration of SEN**

Attendance is a crucial factor when reviewing concerns about learning.

Where attendance is below national expectations over a sustained period, the primary barrier to progress is likely to be non-attendance, not SEN. In these cases, support will first focus on improving attendance, working with families and agencies as needed.

SEN processes will not normally be pursued while attendance remains significantly below expected levels — unless there is clear evidence that attendance difficulties arise from an identified SEN or medical need.

Once attendance improves, needs will be reviewed again.

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## **Diagnosis and the SEN Register**

We recognise that some pupils may have a neurological difference or formal diagnosis, for example autism, or ADHD. This information can clarify a child's learning profile, but it does not automatically mean that a pupil will be placed on the SEN Register.

Where a child's neurological difference is not affecting progress and the school believe their needs are being met through universal, inclusive classroom practice, the relevant

information will be shared with the class teacher and staff who work regularly with the child.

If a neurological difference means that a pupil requires strategies or adjustments that are significantly different from those normally available in the classroom, an individual provision plan will be put in place. Where appropriate, the pupil may be recorded on the SEN Register to reflect the level of additional provision required.

If a pupil experiences difficulties with learning and progress that require targeted intervention which is significantly different from that provided for most pupils, the pupil will be placed on the SEN Register, and a SEN Support Plan will be implemented.

All pupils are monitored and reviewed regularly. Where needs change over time, pupils may be added to, or removed from, the SEN Register in line with evidence of progress and the level of provision required.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is intended to support children who require significantly more care, supervision, or support than would normally be expected for a child of the same age, or who have substantial and ongoing mobility needs. The school will only complete or contribute to DLA documentation where, based on the school's direct experience and professional judgement, we believe that a pupil requires clear, sustained, and exceptional levels of care or supervision within the school setting. This includes situations where a child requires constant or near-constant adult support to access learning, manage personal care, maintain safety, or participate in daily routines. Where needs are met through universal or targeted classroom strategies and do not involve this level of high-dependency support in school, the school will not normally complete DLA documentation.

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## Broad Areas of Need

We recognise four broad categories of need:

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

Pupils may fall into more than one area.

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## Inclusive Teaching and Everyday Provision

High-quality teaching is the first and most important way pupils' needs are met. Teaching is deliberately **inclusive from the outset**, recognising that every class includes pupils with a range of needs.

Lessons routinely include approaches such as:

- support with regulation
- regular movement or “reset” breaks
- clear, simple language
- multiple ways of explaining concepts
- repetition, revisiting and reminding
- limited choices to reduce overload
- visual timetables and prompts
- supportive displays and memory aids
- appropriate technology support
- a balance of listening, talking and doing
- explicit modelling of *how* to complete tasks
- chunked learning steps
- alternative recording methods
- scaffolding learning
- coloured overlays/screens where appropriate
- strategic seating plans
- a mixture of ability and mixed ability groups
- assistive technology

These strategies benefit all pupils — not only those on the SEN Register.

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## **Resourcing, Staffing and Targeted Support**

We use our budget carefully and invest significantly in SEN resources such as:

- sit-fit cushions and wobble seating
- TheraBand and sensory tools
- visual and organisational supports
- fidget items
- appropriate technology
- specialist services
- training for all staff
- personalised subscription programs such as Lexia, Nessy

We employ teaching assistants — including staff with specific SEN responsibilities — to work:

- 1:1 where appropriate
- in targeted small groups
- alongside teachers in class

This allows us to reduce group sizes in key learning sessions (including phonics), enabling more personalised teaching.

Where budget allows, we also employ additional teachers in certain year groups to further increase capacity and precision teaching.

Staff deployment is reviewed regularly, and classes are occasionally reorganised (typically on a two-year cycle) to ensure a balanced spread of needs.

We also run structured programmes such as Lego Therapy and Boomerang,

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## **A Graduated Approach to SEN Support**

### **Identification**

SEN Meetings, senior meetings and pupil progress meetings help identify pupils making less than expected progress.

High-quality, targeted and inclusive teaching is ensured first. Where progress or access remains limited, concerns are discussed with the SENCo and recorded using Stage 1 processes.

Where provision is additional to or significantly different from our provision, the pupil is added to SEN Support and the assess–plan–do–review cycle begins.

Decisions are based on sustained first hand evidence, not single data points.

Reading and phonics progress are monitored closely as key indicators.

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### **External Specialists**

Where a pupil continues to make limited progress despite targeted support, and with parental consent, the school may seek specialist advice or make a referral to services. Specialists from some services come into school regularly to support and advise SEN staff. They may observe the child in class and work with them individually to complete assessments. Services/specialist may include, but is not limited to:

- Educational Psychologist (EP)
- Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Autism Support
- Rise Navigation Hub – Neurodevelopmental Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Paediatric or Neurology Specialist
- Dyslexia and Learning Services
- Other relevant external professionals or agencies, as appropriate

The impact of any specialist involvement and support strategies will be reviewed regularly as part of the school's graduated response.

In Early Years education, we may draw on the expertise of Early Years SEN specialists to support children who initially find it difficult to access provision or who arrive with very low starting points across the areas of learning. This is not necessarily because a confirmed SEN need has been identified, but because some children may appear behind due to limited prior exposure or differing early experiences. We recognise that, as children settle into routines, engage with peers and access our nursery and reception provision, they often make rapid progress, and early gaps can be explained developmentally. In these cases, specialist input helps us tailor initial support and ensure a smooth and supported transition.

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## Types of Individual SEN Support Plans

### Provision Plan

Records classroom adjustments that are significantly different from usual provision — often used for pupils with autism, ADHD or regulation needs who need more than the universal provision across the school.

They focus on *access to learning*, not academic targets.

### SEN Support Plan

Used when pupils require targeted intervention to improve academic progress.

They contain targets, intervention details and review schedules.

### Pupils Who Need Both Plans

Some pupils require both adjustments and intervention.

Plans are reviewed together to support participation and progress.

Where a pupil is not placed on the SEN Register but has a diagnosis (e.g. autism) and their needs are met through high-quality classroom teaching, a Pupil Passport will be created and shared with relevant staff. Staff will also have access to reports.

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## Assess – Plan – Do – Review

**Assess:** regular review of learning, attendance, behaviour and pupil/parent voice.

**Plan:** agreed adjustments and interventions with clear intended outcomes.

**Do:** teachers remain responsible for provision, supported by TAs and SENCo.

**Review:** at least twice yearly, adapting or removing support as needed.

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## Meetings With Parents and Carers

These meetings form part of the assess–plan–do–review cycle.

Parents/carers are invited to formal SEN review meetings twice yearly:

- February – review and adapt provision
- June – evaluate progress and plan ahead

### Additional Routine Contact

All parents also have access to:

- meeting the class teacher within the first six weeks of the school year
- a mid-year report
- a parents' evening in March/April
- an end-of-year report
- drop-in opportunities after reports

This ensures communication is regular, structured and purposeful.

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## Parent Requested Assessments

We respect parents' right to seek private assessments or 'right to choose' and, where appropriate, we will share factual school information to support this process. All external reports are read carefully.

Significant weight is given to the professional judgement and evidence of school staff, supported by the SENCO, who work with and observe the pupil daily across lessons, routines, and wider school contexts.

Parents are expected, where commissioning a private assessment, to request that the external professional observes their child within the school setting, particularly where recommendations are likely to inform provision or support in school. Where this does not occur, school-based evidence will be the primary source used to inform decision-making.

The school may not implement every recommendation within a private report, particularly where the assessor has not observed the pupil in lessons. The school will prioritise strategies that are:

- necessary
- reasonable

- evidence-based
- sustainable

## Timescales

Requests for information to support private reports require time to gather accurate and meaningful evidence. The school manages SEN casework carefully to ensure that statutory duties, in-school support, and existing pupils' needs remain the priority.

Private assessment requests are not planned into the school's SEN workload in advance and therefore cannot be treated as urgent or prioritised above existing SEN responsibilities. A minimum of three weeks' notice is required, and all requests will be scheduled and completed in line with staff availability, workload, and school priorities. Requests will be processed in date order

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## **EHCP**

Where a pupil continues to have significant needs despite the school's graduated support, the school may request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. Any request must be supported by clear and sustained evidence over time. The school's SENCO and Family Support Worker are available to provide guidance and support to parents and carers throughout this process.

When a parent/carer requests the school applies for an EHCP our school will only do so if we believe that a pupil's needs meet Coventry Local Authority's threshold criteria. Parents and carers retain the right to make a direct request to the local authority.

Further information about EHC needs assessments and Coventry's Local Offer is available at: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/SENlocaloffer>

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## **Behaviour, Homework, Inclusion and Reasonable Adjustments**

Our behaviour policy is highly inclusive. All pupils, including those with SEN, are expected to follow the same clear rules that keep everyone safe. Where SEN affects behaviour, we may put reasonable adjustments in place — e.g. visual prompts, regulation breaks, adult check-ins — but expectations remain. For pupils with high needs e.g.: EHCP's the approach may be modified to support the child. SEN does not remove responsibility for behaviour. Where expectations are not met, consequences may still apply, alongside teaching and support to help pupils improve. Our homework is also inclusive in approach. It is minimal and pitched at

pupils' academic ability. For example, reading books are based on the stage they have been assessed at, and timetables are personalised to their stage too.

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## **Evaluating Effectiveness**

We evaluate SEN provision through:

- early identification
- improved progress
- participation in school life
- strong partnerships with families and agencies
- pupil voice
- informed governance

Evidence includes assessment data, observation, scrutiny and review outcomes.

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## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed annually alongside the SEN Information Report to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness.

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## **Complaints**

Concerns should be raised first with the class teacher or SENCO. Formal processes should follow the school complaints policy which is available on the school website.