Special Educational Needs and Disabilities policy

Loving God - Serving others - Flourishing together

RESPECT – ASPIRE – REJOICE

Approved by:	Full Governors	**Date:** 17 September 2026
Next review due by:	September 2027	

*"**Encourage one another and build each other up.**"*
1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

Highlighted sections are proposed changes made to the policy for 2026-2027 to reflect updated government advice and guidance/best practice.

VALUES

Our vision: "***Loving God - Serving Others - Flourishing Together***" and linked bible reference: "*Encourage one another and build each other up.*" 1 Thessalonians 5:11, are at the core of everything we do. They underpin our teaching and learning, and provide an environment which prepares our pupils as confident, happy citizens.

Our values: **Respect**, **Aspire** and **Rejoice** were chosen as verbs, as they are what our St. Mark's Community **do** to support us living out our vision daily.

All teachers are responsible for teaching children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. It is the role of the Inclusion Coordinator (alongside the class teachers and other members of the Senior Leadership Team) to identify, monitor and track progress of children who are not achieving their full potential, and to ensure the correct support and provision is in place to meet each child's individual needs.

AIMS

- To enable all children to access and be involved in all aspects of school life
- To prioritise early intervention and ensure needs are assessed and supported as early as possible
- To remove individual barriers to learning to enable each individual to succeed
- To respond to the specific needs of the individual pupil
- To make learning accessible for all regardless their SEND needs
- To have a culture where high expectations for all ensure all children make good progress

PRINCIPLES

We endorse the principles of BCP Council's SEND and Inclusion Strategy.

At St. Mark's our aim is to recognise any additional needs as early as possible through observations, tracking and the monitoring of children's attainment and progress.

We are committed to identifying and delivering positive **outcomes** for all children and we believe that children with SEND should be entitled to an inclusive education. We ensure all staff receive regular training and updates for the main areas of SEND.

Legislation and guidance

This is based on the statutory guidance Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education and working together to improve school attendance.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The SEN Code of Practice 0-25 (2015) which provides guidance on the Special Educational Needs system for children aged 0-25.
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance

equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it
- The governance guide for academy trusts which sets out governors' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out the school's obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and its duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special educational needs

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.
This policy is also made in line with the revised Statutory RSHE Policy (September 2026) and the updated **Looked-After Children Cost Regulations** regarding out-of-borough EHCP placements.

Although not yet statutory, our SEND policy is also informed by Every Child Achieving and Thriving (2026), a government policy paper which outlines proposed forthcoming changes in the SEND system and by the policies already adopted by BCP local authority and outlined in the BCP Council Belonging Strategy (2024).

Inclusion and equal opportunities
At our school we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their needs and abilities, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.
We will achieve this by ensuring pupils are provided with high-quality adaptive teaching and by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

As a school our role is to:
'**Support the child or young person and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.**' SEND Code of practice 2015 (1:1)

DEFINITIONS
Special educational needs
A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.
They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:
- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- A disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools.
Disability
Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.
The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and DISABILITIES (SEND)

SEND provision is educational provision which **is additional to** or **different from** the provision made for the majority of children of similar age in a mainstream school. Children with SEND may display difficulties in one or more of the following areas:

- **Communication and interaction**
- **Cognition and learning**
- **Social, emotional and mental health**
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**

Step One

If, in consultation with parents, the class teacher and the Inclusion Coordinator, it is felt that a child with SEND is not making sufficient progress despite access to universal provision, high quality adaptive teaching, which is in place universally and general intervention, more individualised support may be agreed as necessary and an Individual Support Plan (ISP) may be initiated. This records agreed targets for development (which are Specific-Measurable-Attainable-Realistic-Timed (SMART)) that can be worked on each week during 1:1 and small group sessions. These are reviewed termly with parents/carers, class teacher and child. Children with ISPs are placed on the SEND register and their progress is monitored closely.

Step Two

SEND provision at St. Mark's (in line with the 2015 SEND Code of Practice) follows a graduated approach of **Assess – Plan – Do – Review (APDR).** If, after one or more cycles of Assess, Plan, Do, Review it is felt that, despite what has been put in place, the child continues to make less progress than needed, then it may be deemed appropriate for the Inclusion Coordinator, in consultation with parents, to refer the child to an outside agency or specialist service for further assessment and support.

At St Mark's we work closely with the local authority to access specialist support as required. From September 2026, this will be delivered through the authority's 'Experts at Hand' service. The updated list of outside agency support can be found in the schools 'Local Offer' which can be found on the school website. We also work closely with the designated BCP SEN Leads and regional hubs, to seek advice and support to shape our SEN provision and policies, including working closely with this team to establish a SEN support Inclusion Base within school.

Sometimes an outside agency will assess a child by observing them in class and working with them directly and will then provide a written report outlining how we in school can further support the child. We will arrange a meeting for the outside agency to share this report with parents, class teacher and Inclusion Coordinator, which gives everybody an opportunity to discuss the suggested recommendations and implement provision based on a holistic view of each child and their individual needs, and taking into account expert-led guidance.

Step Three

If, despite additional support put in place by school and outside agencies, insufficient progress is being made OR where a child has complex and/or long-term needs, a formal request for an

EDUCATION HEALTH CARE NEEDS ASSESSMNET may be made. In line with the 2014 Code of Practice and 'The Local Offer', the Local Authority, Health, Social Care (where necessary) and Education, alongside parents (and the child where appropriate), will meet to devise a support package with identified responsibility for funding.

DISABILITIES

Children with disabilities are entitled to an inclusive education and are encouraged to try all experiences alongside their peers. Some children may require additional support such as;

- a designated adult
- class based teaching assistants
- additional equipment, adjustments and adaptations to the environment
- an adapted timetable to allow more time for rest breaks or movement between lessons

Children with physical disabilities will receive support from outside agencies or may have an EHCP in place to meet their needs.

Facilities at St. Mark's School for children with disabilities

- We have two toilets designed for children with physical disabilities in school. There are also hand rails, toilet steps etc in designated toilets for children to use.
- Access to the upper levels of school have been addressed by the implementation of a stair lift. There is also a shower room and physiotherapy table located in a separate room. Access to the school building has been addressed through the implementation of ramps and slopes with acceptable gradients.
- There is a hoist to aid access to the swimming pool and there is an independent changing room in the swimming pool area should a child require it.
- Transport to and from school is organised through BCP Council for a child with associated needs.
- Hearing Loops are fitted in school where necessary – rooms are sound proofed where possible with the assistance of the Hearing Impaired Service.
- The Inclusion Coordinator, Head teacher and Site Manager carry out ongoing assessments of the school building in terms of access to and throughout it, in line with the needs of the child. Further information and action planning can be found in the 'Accessibility Policy'.
- Equipment is available on loan from the Children's Development Centre (Poole) and Poole Hospital when requested.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body have legal responsibilities with regards to SEND and the roles outlined within this policy.

The Governing Body monitors the effectiveness of the SEND Policy against the criteria as outlined in this policy and reports the outcomes to parents in the Annual Report.

The Curriculum & Standards Committee is responsible for overseeing the provision for SEND and reports back to the Governing Body once each term and the Inclusion Coordinator meets with the SEND Governor termly. Mrs Lisa McGaw is the named Governor for SEND.

ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Children with SEND, Looked After Children (LAC) or those with Refugee status are admitted without bias through the usual admission arrangements. This is clarified in the School's Admissions Policy – see 'vulnerable children'.

Where a child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP) which names St Mark's as their school, then that child will be admitted to the school and the number of available places in the PAN will reduce correspondingly. Admission of children with an EHCP is dealt with by the home Local Authority (LA) (which is where you reside).

The Inclusion Coordinator may contact parents who have accepted a place for their child at St Mark's School when they have raised concerns regarding their child's development. This ensures a smooth transition and the correct support strategies in place prior to the child starting school.

LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

We have close links with local pre-schools and secondary schools to ensure effective transition. We also use local special schools' advisory teachers and facilities to support children in an outreach capacity, and for staff training where necessary. Eg. Winchelsea, Linwood, Longspee Schools

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Our partnership with parents is extremely important and we prioritise regular communication with parents throughout the APDR cycle and when a child is receiving additional support. There is an 'open-door' policy to talk to the Inclusion Coordinator and the opportunity to book in appointments is readily available throughout the year.

STAFF

The Inclusion Coordinator is responsible for co-ordinating provision for children with SEN. The Inclusion Coordinator is a qualified teacher who acts as the school SENCO and has completed the NPQSENCO. They work alongside local outreach services, link with regional hubs and support networks and the local authority to receive regular CPD to ensure that provision is continuously reviewed and updated and is grounded in research-led best practice.
All staff receive regular CPD, ranging from training sessions to ongoing coaching and informal feedback from more senior staff, to ensure they understand a range of needs and that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to remove barriers to learning for our pupils.

THE SCHOOL 'SEND INFORMATION REPORT'

The school produces an annual updated 'SEND Information Report' which can be found on the school's website. The purpose of this is to inform parents about what support is available for their child at St Mark's.

SAFEGUARDING

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers, and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect in this group.
For more details of the pastoral support we offer pupils with SEND, and the support we provide to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face, see our safeguarding/child protection policy.

REVIEWING THE POLICY

The effectiveness of this policy is monitored and reviewed annually by the Inclusion Coordinator and Governors and is checked against current procedures and legal requirements. Consultation in the early stages of review involves all teaching staff, support assistants and Governors, and is shared with parents of SEN children at St Mark's to gather parent insight to inform both our SEND Policy and SEND Information Report.

COMPLAINTS

Any complaints with regards to this policy should follow the Complaints Procedure, which is available on our website.