

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

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MONITORING AND REVIEW

Staff Responsible	Deputy Head (Academic)
Reviewed by	SLT and governors
Approved by	SLT and governors
Frequency of Review	Annually
Date of Last Review	September 2026
Date of Next Review	September 2027

The School refers to all staff and students in St Mary's School, which includes the Early Years/Foundations Stage (EYFS), the Preparatory Department (Years 1-6), Senior House (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form (Years 12-13).

The term 'parent' refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.

AIMS

At St Mary's School we are committed to providing a quality education in a caring and stimulating environment. The School is committed to ensuring that all learners have full and equitable access to a broad and balanced curriculum. No learner will be denied access to teaching, learning, or the curriculum on the basis of special educational needs or disability.

We value each learner and encourage everyone to reach their full potential within all aspects of school life. We have a whole school approach to meeting the educational needs of the learners, which includes EYFS, Prep, Senior House and the Sixth Form. Learners with individual learning needs have a high priority within all areas of the curriculum. Our aim is to meet the individual needs of all learners within the School, in partnership with the young people themselves and their parents/carers. We recognise that some will need special provision during their time at school. The type of provision will vary greatly between individuals.

WIDER REFERENCES

This policy operates within a wider national framework. It operates with due regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- SEND Code - SEN and Disability Code of Practice, 0-25 years (2015)
- Children & Families Act (2014)
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools (2014)

RELATED INTERNAL POLICY

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Teaching, Assessment and Feedback Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Examinations Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Relationships and Sex education (RSE) Policy
- Behaviour, Rewards and Sanctions Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Educational Visits Policy
- Restrictive Interventions & Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- Online Safety Policy

SEND

The SEND Code of Practice (2015) defines the SEND categories as Communication and Interaction; Cognition and Learning; Social, Emotional and Mental Health; and Sensory and/or Physical Needs. St Mary's School recognises the Department for Education definition of Special Educational Needs: *'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/her'* (SEND Code of Practice 2015). Special Educational Needs does not refer exclusively to learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). A learner may require SEND support where they have a special educational need or disability which calls for special educational provision. SEND support may be appropriate where a learner requires provision that is additional to or different from that ordinarily available to other learners of the same age, regardless of whether they are making expected academic progress.

Learners may have a wide range of learning profiles, disabilities, developmental or medical conditions, or other needs which may result in them requiring special educational provision. These may include, for example, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), speech, language and communication needs, sensory needs, or physical needs.

The School recognises that terms such as 'learning difference', 'neurodiversity' and 'neurodevelopmental condition' are used in educational and professional contexts to describe aspects of individual learning profiles. These terms are not interchangeable with 'special educational needs' and do not, in themselves, determine whether a learner has SEND.

SEN and disability are related but distinct concepts. A learner may be disabled and protected under the Equality Act 2010 without having special educational needs. The School's duty to make reasonable adjustments applies to disabled learners regardless of whether they are identified as having SEN.

SAFEGUARDING LEARNERS WITH SEND

The School recognises that learners with SEND, and those with certain medical or physical health conditions, may face additional safeguarding challenges, both online and offline. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), all staff will remain alert to the additional barriers that can exist when recognising abuse, neglect or exploitation in these learners.

These barriers may include:

- assumptions that indicators of possible abuse, such as changes in behaviour, presentation or mood, or physical injury, relate to a learner's SEND, disability or medical condition without further exploration;
- an increased vulnerability to peer isolation or bullying, including prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying;
- the possibility that bullying, abuse or other harmful behaviours may have a disproportionate impact on a learner with SEND without outward signs being apparent;
- communication barriers or difficulties which may affect a learner's ability to recognise, understand, manage or report safeguarding concerns;
- difficulties in recognising or understanding that a particular experience or behaviour constitutes abuse;
- increased vulnerability associated with intimate care, isolation from peers or dependence upon adults for care or support; and
- cognitive or developmental difficulties which may affect a learner's understanding of online content, including distinguishing fact from fiction and understanding the consequences of repeating online content or behaviours.

All staff must therefore maintain professional curiosity and must not assume that concerning changes in behaviour, presentation, communication or wellbeing are attributable solely to a learner's SEND, disability or medical condition.

Where a safeguarding concern arises in relation to a learner with SEND, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or a Deputy DSL, will liaise closely with the relevant SEND lead. The School will consider whether additional pastoral support, communication support or reasonable adjustments are required to enable the learner to understand, communicate and participate effectively in safeguarding processes.

Staff should be alert to the possibility that a learner with SEND may benefit from additional support before statutory intervention, including Early Help or Family Help where appropriate, and any such concerns should be discussed with the DSL in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.

The School's safeguarding procedures apply equally to learners with SEND, and all concerns will be responded to in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

OBJECTIVES

St Mary's School undertakes to ensure the following:

- To recognise the need for an identification and assessment procedure, so that all learners may receive an appropriately differentiated curriculum and support to suit their individual needs
- To develop learners' metacognitive skills in order for them to increase in confidence
- To promote an ethos of equal opportunity
- To ensure that each learner has full access to the appropriate, broad and balanced curriculum to which they are entitled
- To work in open collaboration with learners, parents/carers, teachers and other agencies
- That there is a designated governor for SEND
- That appropriate assessment procedures will be used to consider the needs of those
- To monitor the learning experience, access, participation and progress of learners with identified SEND and other additional learning needs, and to ensure that appropriate provision and reasonable adjustments are in place where required

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

'Provision for children with special needs is a matter for everyone in the setting.' (SEND Code of Practice, 2015).

Head and Governors

The Governors are responsible for determining school policy and provision for learners with SEND. The Head has overall responsibility for the admission and assessment procedures in the School and is responsible for all aspects of the School's SEND provision and keeping the Governing Body fully informed of the implementation of the School's policy in practice. Together with the Governors, he will support the SEND Policy and ensure the School implements the objectives set out within it.

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team are responsible for supporting the implementation of the SEND Policy through their capacity as line managers of academic and other departments.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, in conjunction with relevant members of the safeguarding team and/or LEAPS team, is responsible for ensuring the safeguarding of learners placed in alternative provision, and will obtain written confirmation of safeguarding checks from the provider, and maintain ongoing communication with the provider.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy DSLs will liaise closely with the relevant SEND lead/LEAPS Team whenever safeguarding concerns arise in relation to a learner with SEND, disability or relevant medical condition.

LEAPS Team

The Head of Support for Learning (LEAPS), and the Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition, with the LEAPS Team, are responsible for the implementation of the SEND Policy by:

- Overseeing the day to day operation of the policy
- Coordinating the additional Learning Support provision as appropriate for learners with a learning difference or difficulty
- Maintaining the Learning Support Register
- Liaising with, and providing guidance to, teaching staff, such as on differentiation or adaptation strategies for individual learners
- Liaising with parents/carers and external agencies as necessary
- Liaising with alternative providers of education, as necessary
- Supporting with EHCP applications
- Working with the learners to ensure they are accessing the curriculum
- Maintaining accurate records for the purposes of inspection and the smooth running of the department
- Assessing learners' needs and making access arrangements applications as necessary
- Liaising with the Examinations Officer to ensure compliance with JCQ Access Arrangements Regulations
- Attending relevant training to maintain professional standards
- Identifying/providing staff development opportunities when necessary on matters of SEND
- Monitoring progress of learners on the SEND register
- Monitoring the use of assistive technologies and AI tools used to support learners on the SEND register
- Collaborating with the Head of PSHE to ensure that preventative education and RSHE are accessible, inclusive and appropriate to learners' age and stage of development, with content, communication and delivery adapted where necessary to take account of SEND and other vulnerabilities
- Working closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team where safeguarding concerns relate to a learner with SEND, ensuring that the learner's communication needs, additional vulnerabilities and any necessary reasonable adjustments are understood and taken into account

Learning support provision is also provided by members of the LEAPS team e.g. Specialist Teachers, the EYFS SEND Assistant, Learning Support Assistants, Teaching Assistants and the LEAPS Administrator.

Some interventions may also be delivered by other members of staff in the Prep Department and Senior House.

Teachers

All teachers at St Mary's are responsible for the educational provision for learners with individual needs within their classes/subject groups by:

- Developing and adapting plans and schemes of work to take proper account of the needs of all learners, in terms of ability, need and aptitudes
- Delivering high quality teaching that is adaptive in order to meet the individual needs of the majority of learners
- Bringing to the attention of Heads of Department any cause for concerns about learners experiencing difficulties in their subject, through Departmental meetings

- Liaising with the LEAPS Team where there are any concerns about learners with individual needs
- Regularly referring to the LEAPS Register held on the School system
- Reading and implementing the adaptive teaching strategies listed on the learner's ISAMS notes
- Referring to Access Arrangements documentation prior to administering an assessment
- Completing Learner Needs Audits as requested, and providing other evidence for Access Arrangements
- Maintaining confidentiality in all SEND matters
- Attending development sessions when necessary in order to develop understanding of SEND issues
- Support SEND learners in their use of approved assistive and AI-linked technologies such as text-to-speech software or adaptive learning platforms and ensuring these tools are integrated safely and effectively into the learning environment in line with safeguarding and online safety guidance

IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

St Mary's takes a staged, partnership approach to identifying, assessing and meeting the needs of its learners.

St Mary's is committed to the early identification of SEND as it can:

- Minimise the overall impact of the difficulties encountered
- Support teachers to provide appropriate individualised learning opportunities
- Maximise the opportunities for the learner to respond positively to support
- Empower the learner in their learning
- Enable the learner to become more independent
- Allow the opportunity for further interventions to be considered

Referral can come from a variety of sources including:

- Information at application (disclosure)
- Transfer information from previous school
- Learner request
- Subject teacher raising concerns at their Departmental meeting and a referral made to LEAPS
- Parental request
- Head of Year or other pastoral team member's request

Disclosure at application is encouraged, so that Access Arrangements can be put in place, where appropriate, for any admission assessments being administered. As outlined in the Admissions Policy, we advise parents/carers of learners with special educational needs or physical disabilities to discuss their child's requirements with the School before they sit the entrance examination so that we can make adequate provision for them for the examination in terms of, for example, extra time or other special arrangements.

Where a pre-existing need is identified (for instance, the learner has previously been assessed), the information regarding the learner's needs will be requested and considered. Where the child is already known to an outside agency, such as health or social care, we work in a multi-agency way to ensure that we have the right information so that the best possible provision, intervention and support can be put in place as early as possible. Further information will be gathered through

conversations with the learner, their parents/carers, and their previous/current school. Support arrangements, where possible, will be agreed in partnership with learner and parent.

Regardless of the age of the learner, the School takes a graduated response to concerns surrounding progress and the support provided to them. Teachers and support staff are skilled at identifying the needs of learners in our setting and understanding how their development should progress.

In the Prep department, should a concern be raised by a member of staff or a parent in relation to the progress or achievement of a learner, teachers will review their adaptive teaching strategies and follow the Graduated Response Framework as follows:

Universal (ordinarily available) provision

Teacher → adaptive teaching → monitor → review

Targeted support

Teacher / Subject Lead / Form Tutor → targeted strategies / intervention → review

Specialist SEND support

LEAPS involvement where there is evidence that ordinarily available provision and targeted strategies have not sufficiently removed the barrier.

In Senior House, should a concern be raised by a member of staff, a parent or the learner themselves, in relation to the progress or achievement of a learner, an investigation will take place, which may include:

- Review/discussion of the strategies in place
- Recommendations of new strategies for adaptive teaching
- Classroom observations
- Teacher questionnaire
- Learner interview/feedback

Where a concern is raised, some initial investigations will take place to gather feedback from teachers and the learner themselves. Where necessary, the LEAPS Team may arrange some initial assessment; then if appropriate, and in consultation with parents/carers, the learner ~~can~~ may be referred for a full diagnostic assessment, to get a broader picture of their strengths and challenges by one of the School's associated Educational Psychologists.

Parents/carers may choose to obtain an assessment independently of the School. Any external report will be considered alongside the School's own evidence and the learner's normal way of working. An external assessment or diagnosis does not, in itself, guarantee an examination access arrangement. Access Arrangements will be considered and implemented in accordance with the current JCQ regulations and the School's procedures, including the requirement for appropriate evidence of need and normal way of working. It is preferable that parents liaise with the LEAPS team prior to commissioning an assessment independently, in order for the School to provide the necessary support and information to those completing the assessment.

PROVISION

Within our setting, we aim that every learner with identified SEND will have appropriate support to meet their needs, with the help of outside agencies and other specialists where necessary. This provision is "additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made for learners in their year." (SEND Code of Practice 2015) St. Mary's recognises that SEND is a continuum and thus the LEAPS provision required will vary between individuals as their needs will be different.

The School provides, within its delegated resources, a range of reasonable adjustments and ordinarily available provision to support learners with SEND. This includes high-quality teaching, differentiation, and targeted in-class support designed to enable all learners to access the curriculum. This core provision forms part of the School's ordinarily available provision and is provided without charge to parents/carers.

In recognition of the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities which may affect some learners with SEND, the School will consider whether additional pastoral support, access to a trusted adult, communication support or other reasonable adjustments are required. Appropriate arrangements will be made to enable learners with communication difficulties to express concerns and participate meaningfully in discussions about their welfare and safety.

Where the use of reasonable force or restrictive intervention is being considered in relation to a learner with SEND, a disability, mental health need or medical condition, staff will take account of the learner's additional vulnerability, individual circumstances and the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010. Wherever possible, proactive planning, appropriate reasonable adjustments and individualised support strategies will be used to reduce the likelihood that restrictive intervention is required. Any use of reasonable force will be undertaken in accordance with the School's relevant policies and current statutory guidance.

Appropriate support may include:

- Support from a pastoral leader or mentor e.g. tutor or Head of Year
- Personalised adaptive learning strategies
- Individual/small group intervention delivered by our specialist SEND staff: Priority is given to learners with EHCPs and to learners in exam years in Key Stage 4.
- Specialist equipment
- Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) or Teaching Assistants within classes

In order to ensure that learners with SEND are appropriately supported by their teachers in lessons, training opportunities are provided to staff to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills required to differentiate appropriately. SEND training is given during the New Staff Induction process when staff join the School, and bespoke training from LEAPS or from outside agencies, specific to the learner that they support, is provided where relevant.

A learner's individual needs may best be met in the class within curriculum subjects, through appropriate, high quality, adaptive teaching: all subject teachers are responsible for catering for these needs and for supporting and monitoring progress accordingly. Teaching staff are supported in their lesson planning by the LEAPS Team and, where appropriate, the learner's personalised adaptive learning strategies.

The Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition, and the Head of the Prep Department, regularly liaise regarding learners who may need support, and also liaise with class teachers, on a termly basis, to review the support in place and adjust or redirect it as necessary.

The Director of Learning Support: Prep and Transition works closely with Head of Pre-Prep and SEND Assistant in EYFS to ensure regular monitoring and review of progress throughout the early years, in addition to the two specific points for formal assessment. A graduated response to needs takes the form of a four-part cycle: assess, plan, do, review (as above), with a focus on early help, if appropriate, as well as strategies and provision aimed at removing barriers. On occasion, it may be

necessary to seek specialist help or request an EHC-Needs Assessment. Parents/carers are involved throughout this process and kept fully informed.

In some cases, parents/carers may request, or the School may offer, additional SEND provision beyond the School's ordinarily available provision. From September 2026, the School may charge for certain additional services, including individual specialist teaching, dyslexia intervention, Learning Support Assistant (LSA) support, screening assessments and targeted learning programmes. The nature and cost of any chargeable provision will be clearly communicated to parents/carers in advance and will be subject to the School's terms and conditions.

The School's ordinarily available provision, including high-quality adaptive teaching, reasonable adjustments and appropriate classroom strategies, will continue to be provided as part of the School's core provision. Chargeable provision will not replace or restrict a learner's access to the School's core SEND provision or reasonable adjustments, and learners will not be disadvantaged in their access to education because their parents/carers choose not to purchase additional services.

Informal SEND assessments and examination Access Arrangements assessments undertaken by the School will continue to be provided without charge.

Where a learner has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the School will work with the relevant Local Authority and parents/carers to ensure that the provision specified in the EHCP is appropriately considered and delivered, in accordance with the applicable statutory, funding and contractual arrangements. The existence of an EHCP does not automatically mean that all provision is provided without charge to parents/carers, nor does it automatically make parents/carers responsible for the cost of all the provision.

All decisions regarding SEND support will continue to be made in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice and the School's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

Reduced Curriculum

In exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate for a learner to have a reduced curriculum where this is considered necessary to meet an identified special educational need or disability, or to support the learner's access to education. Any reduction to the curriculum will be considered on an individual basis, with the aim of minimising any impact on the learner's curriculum entitlement and educational opportunities.

Before a learner is exempted from a specific subject or has their curriculum reduced, the proposed arrangements will be discussed with the relevant class or subject teacher, Deputy Head (Academic), LEAPS and the learner's parents/carers. The learner's views will also be sought and taken into account. Final authorisation will be sought from the Head.

Any reduced curriculum will be reviewed regularly and will remain in place only for as long as it is considered necessary and appropriate. The School will monitor the impact of the arrangements on the learner's progress, wellbeing and access to the wider curriculum, and will consider whether the learner can return to the full curriculum or whether alternative arrangements are required.

Learners with additional needs will be supported during the GCSE Options process to identify a suitable pathway at Key Stage 4, taking account of their strengths, needs and longer-term educational goals.

Assistive Technology

At St Mary's we value the use of Assistive Technology to support learning and to help learners develop independence. In line with the School's safeguarding, online safety and acceptable-use arrangements, assistive technology and AI-linked tools will be selected, implemented and monitored with appropriate consideration of learners' individual vulnerabilities, understanding and ability to recognise and manage online risk. Depending on their needs, learners in Senior House and Prep Department may be recommended to use the online learning platforms Lexia (a specialist programme to support literacy development), and Century (providing overlearning opportunities for the core subjects). These platforms are selected for their educational value and compliance with current safeguarding standards. Learners should access the programme regularly to see the best outcomes and this will be facilitated in school wherever possible. Learners in Senior House may be given the opportunity to use the text-to-voice software 'Everway Read & Write', to support their reading and studying; they are encouraged to use it in the classroom as well as their independent study and where appropriate they will be granted access to this in examinations, should they qualify for a Reader as part of their Access Arrangements. Where specific interventions or programmes are chargeable, this will be in accordance with the School's arrangements for additional SEND provision set out in this policy.

Access Arrangements

Access Arrangements for examinations will be applied for and put in place, in accordance with the current JCQ Access Arrangements Regulations, where there is sufficient, appropriate evidence. Learners in Senior House will be assessed by one of the Level 7 qualified LEAPS Team at the start of each Key Stage. KS4 Access Arrangements processes will usually begin in Year 9, to allow sufficient time to establish evidence of need and normal way of working in accordance with current JCQ requirements.

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

In circumstances where a learner with SEND requires education outside of the standard classroom setting, St Mary's School may arrange for alternative provision to meet their individual needs.

The School remains responsible for the safeguarding of any learner it places in alternative provision and will ensure that the provider has undergone all necessary safeguarding checks, including confirmation in writing of their compliance with statutory requirements.

Regular communication will be maintained between the School and the provider to monitor the learner's progress, wellbeing, and the quality of the provision. Any decision to place a learner in alternative provision will be made in consultation with the learner, their parents/carers, and relevant professionals, and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it continues to meet the learner's needs.

The School will maintain an accurate record of where a learner placed in alternative provision is educated during the school day, including the address of the provider and details of any subcontracted provision or satellite sites attended. Placements will be reviewed at least half-termly to provide assurance that the learner is attending regularly, remains safe and that the provision continues to meet their individual needs.

The School will obtain written confirmation that appropriate safeguarding checks have been undertaken on individuals working at the alternative provision and that the provider will notify the School of any arrangements or changes, including relevant staffing changes, which could affect the safeguarding of the learner.

Where safeguarding concerns arise, the placement will be reviewed immediately and will be suspended or terminated where necessary unless and until those concerns have been satisfactorily addressed. The School remains responsible for undertaking its own safeguarding due diligence and for assuring itself that commissioned provision is appropriate for the individual learner.

PARENTAL LIAISON & INVOLVEMENT

Along with the learner voice, the parent voice is important to the process of ensuring the correct support for learners with learning differences. St Mary's will do all that is reasonable to report and consult with parents/carers about their son/daughter's learning difference. They will be sufficiently informed so as to be able to understand the actions the School is taking to support their son/daughter. This is particularly relevant during the assessment stages and support planning. When reviewing support, contributions from the parents/carers and the learner will be sought and valued. Parents/carers are involved through informal communication with teachers and through formal procedures such as Parents' Evenings and scheduled review meetings. Where necessary, parental consent will be sought in consultation with relevant health professionals and/or outside agencies.

Learners with individual needs and their parents/carers may decline the offer of LEAPS support. These learners will remain on the Learning Support Register. Regular consultation and liaison occurs between the LEAPS Team and relevant parties where a learner is to transfer between Key Stages so as to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Where a learner is transferring from a different school, LEAPS will seek to liaise closely with the feeder school, so as to support the transition of the learner and ensure they are supported appropriately on arrival at St Mary's.

Where a learner with SEND transfers into or out of the School and there is relevant safeguarding information, LEAPS will liaise with the DSL to support the appropriate and secure sharing of information in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance, so that necessary support can be in place without delay.

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

Should a prospective learner have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the School will consult with the parents/carers and the Local Authority (where appropriate) in order to determine whether the identified provision, as detailed in the documentation, can be met by the School. We will cooperate and liaise with the Local Authority as required in order to carry out statutory reviews. The School will record the support and progress of learners with EHCPs and ensure that their needs are taken into account in relation to admissions, discipline, examinations and arrangements for school trips.

The School may support the EHCP application process for current learners where appropriate, or provide advice to parents/carers on how to initiate this process.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The SEND leads within the School will work alongside the Deputy Head to quality assure SEND provision and the successful implementation of the SEND policy. This will be done using a number of mechanisms such as:

- Department Improvement Plan and Self-Evaluation Form.
- Annual SEND report to Governors

- Learning Walks and lesson observations to look at the standard of SEND provision in the classroom
- Audits of staff knowledge and skills in relation to SEND, in order to inform future training needs
- Analysis of the progress of each learner with SEND