Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Nurturing hearts, inspiring minds

St John's RC Primary School | Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust

Policy information	Details
Policy owner	Headteacher and Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo)
Accountable body	Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust Board; local oversight as delegated to St John's Local Governing Body
Previous approval	September 2025
Approved by / date	FGB
Next planned review	September 2027, or earlier following statutory, trust or school changes

1. Legislation, statutory guidance and linked documents

This policy explains how St John's identifies special educational needs, makes provision and works with pupils, families and other professionals. It is informed by the Children and Families Act 2014 (Part 3), the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), the Equality Act 2010, and the statutory guidance on supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. It should be read alongside the current Early Years Foundation Stage framework and relevant Department for Education guidance.

The SEND Information Report, which contains detailed school-specific information required by Schedule 1 of the SEND Regulations, is published separately on the school website and reviewed at least annually and as soon as practicable when key information changes.

This policy should be read alongside the school's SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Equality information and objectives, Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Complaints Policy, Attendance Policy and Data Protection Policy, together with applicable Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust policies.

2. Our Catholic ethos and commitment to inclusion

At St John's RC Primary School, every child is valued and loved within our Catholic community. Guided by our school motto, "Nurturing hearts, inspiring minds", we believe that all pupils should experience belonging, high expectations, a broad and balanced curriculum and the opportunity to flourish spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally.

We aim to remove barriers, anticipate needs and make reasonable adjustments so that children with SEND can participate meaningfully in every aspect of school life, including lessons, worship, OPAL play, lunchtime, breakfast and after-school provision, enrichment clubs, sport, educational visits and residentials. Support will be individually considered, proportionate and planned with pupils and families; participation is not conditional upon a diagnosis.

3. Aims and objectives

- Identify emerging needs early and respond promptly, in partnership with pupils and parents or carers.
- Deliver high-quality, inclusive teaching in every classroom, with appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments.
- Provide additional or different special educational provision when a pupil has SEN and regularly evaluate its impact.
- Support achievement, communication, wellbeing, independence, positive relationships and preparation for the next stage of education.
- Enable pupils and families to contribute meaningfully to decisions about support and to receive clear information.
- Deploy staff, expertise and resources fairly, with regard to the needs of all pupils, including children with EHCPs.
- Work effectively with relevant health, social care, education and local authority partners.
- Monitor outcomes and equitable participation in school life for pupils with SEND.

4. What we mean by special educational needs and disability

A pupil has special educational needs where they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision: educational provision additional to, or different from, that made generally for pupils of the same age in mainstream schools. Disability has a separate legal definition under the Equality Act 2010. A pupil may be disabled without having SEN, may have SEN without being disabled, or may be both.

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need. These are not labels for individual pupils and children may have needs across more than one area:

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

Slow progress or low attainment does not automatically mean that a child has SEN. Equally, attainment at or above age-related expectations does not rule out SEN. A formal diagnosis is not required before school identifies and supports special educational needs. When considering pupils who use English as an additional language, staff carefully distinguish language acquisition from potential SEN.

5. Identifying and assessing needs

The class teacher takes the lead in noticing barriers to learning and participation and discusses concerns with parents, the pupil and the SENDCo. The school uses evidence from classroom observation, assessment and attainment tracking, attendance and punctuality, pupil and parent voice, existing records, information from previous settings, targeted assessments and advice from relevant external professionals.

Identification is a continuous process: pupils do not have to wait for a termly meeting before support is discussed or introduced. Teachers and the SENDCo consider a pupil's strengths, areas of need, barriers within the environment and what has already been tried. The school uses Manchester's Ordinarily Available Provision (OAP) guidance, as appropriate, to inform inclusive classroom practice.

Parents and carers are informed when the school is considering whether their child has SEN. Decisions to record a pupil as receiving SEN Support are based on the special educational provision needed, not solely on an assessment score, a diagnosis or a fixed period of intervention.

6. Inclusive teaching and the first response

High-quality teaching adapted to individual pupils is the first response to emerging difficulties. Teachers remain responsible and accountable for the progress and development of children in their class, including where pupils receive support from teaching assistants, intervention staff or external professionals.

Practical approaches may include carefully scaffolded tasks, adapted communication and presentation, accessible materials, alternative recording methods, sensory or physical adjustments, assistive technology, purposeful use of adult support and changes to routines or the environment. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise and use new skills within ordinary classroom learning.

Where additional help is required, the teacher will discuss and record its purpose, intended outcomes, timescale and impact. Additional catch-up or short-term intervention does not automatically mean that a pupil is on the SEN register.

7. SEN Support: graduated approach

Where a pupil needs special educational provision, the school follows the four-part Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle. The class teacher leads the day-to-day process with advice and coordination from the SENDCo, and with pupils and parents involved.

Stage	What happens at St John's
Assess	Identify strengths, needs and barriers using teacher assessment, pupil and parent views, prior evidence and specialist advice where appropriate.
Plan	Agree intended outcomes, reasonable adjustments, provision, responsible staff and an appropriate review date. Share agreed targets and strategies with the child and parents.
Do	The class teacher puts adaptations and agreed provision into practice and directs supporting adults. Specialist interventions complement, rather than replace, inclusive classroom teaching.
Review	Evaluate actual progress and participation against intended outcomes; seek pupil and parent views; decide whether to continue, amend, intensify or end particular support.

St John's uses pupil passports to capture the pupil's strengths, needs, views and useful classroom approaches. Where more individualised targets and provision are needed, an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) may be used. These tools support, but do not replace, the statutory SEN Support process or an EHCP.

For pupils receiving SEN Support, progress and support are reviewed at least termly with parents or carers, through a meeting or another agreed method, and the views of the child are included in an age-appropriate way. Parents are kept

informed between formal reviews if significant changes arise. The school records decisions, provision and planned next steps securely.

8. Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment and plans

Where it may be necessary for special educational provision to be made in accordance with an EHCP, the school will discuss the possibility of requesting an EHC needs assessment with the pupil and family and provide evidence about needs, outcomes, provision already tried and its impact. A parent or carer also has the right to request an EHC needs assessment directly from the local authority. There is no requirement to complete a set period at SEN Support or to have a diagnosis before a request can be considered.

The local authority decides whether to undertake an assessment and whether to issue an EHCP, following statutory tests and timescales. The school cooperates with the authority and relevant professionals in providing information and responding to consultations.

For pupils with EHCPs, St John's plans and delivers its responsibilities for the special educational provision specified in the plan, working with the local authority and relevant agencies. The school supports the statutory annual review process and ensures pupils and families can contribute; reviews may need to take place earlier where circumstances change. The plan remains a statutory document and is not replaced by a pupil passport or ILP.

9. Supporting pupils with medical conditions, disabilities and accessibility

Some pupils have medical needs, some have SEN, some are disabled, and some fall into more than one category. Appropriate arrangements are made in line with the school's Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy. Individual healthcare plans are developed where needed, with relevant information shared appropriately with staff and used to plan activities and visits.

The school fulfils its Equality Act duties, including making reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and having regard to the accessibility plan. The accessibility plan addresses the curriculum, physical environment and accessible information. A child's medical condition or disability does not automatically result in SEN registration.

10. Participation, inclusion and enrichment

We expect pupils with SEND to have equitable opportunities to participate in the wider life of St John's: assemblies and worship, OPAL and play, school council and pupil leadership, music and sport, clubs, breakfast and after-school provision, educational visits and residentials. Staff consider access at the planning stage, consult families when necessary, make reasonable adjustments and complete individualised risk assessments where appropriate. Safeguarding and safety are considered alongside children's rights to inclusion and participation.

Leaders monitor whether pupils with SEND are taking part in these opportunities, identify barriers and act to reduce inequity. Decisions about support are made according to individual need and risk, rather than blanket exclusions based on a pupil's SEND status.

11. Transition and working with agencies

The class teacher and SENDCo work with families and other professionals to support transition into school, between classes and key stages, and onward to secondary provision. Arrangements may include additional visits, transition meetings, accessible information, pupil passports and timely sharing of relevant records in line with data protection requirements. The school seeks and considers specialist advice where it will help staff to understand need and improve provision.

12. Roles and responsibilities

SEND is a whole-school responsibility. This table distinguishes who is accountable for the strategic framework from who leads provision day to day.

Who	Main responsibilities
Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust Board	Retains overall statutory accountability for SEND and equality duties across the Trust; ensures appropriate policies, provision, resourcing and oversight. Delegates functions in accordance with the Trust's scheme of delegation without relinquishing accountability.
Local Governing Body / SEND link governor	Provides local scrutiny and assurance as delegated; meets leaders, reviews impact, access, participation and pupil outcomes, challenges appropriately and reports through Trust governance arrangements. Does not manage individual pupil cases.
Headteacher / school senior leaders	Lead an inclusive school culture; ensure policy implementation, staff development, resources, staffing, reasonable adjustments and effective monitoring; ensure SEND is considered in curriculum, safeguarding, attendance and enrichment decisions; report to governors and Trust leaders.
SENDCo	Coordinates day-to-day SEND provision and the graduated approach; advises and supports teachers; oversees SEND records, assessments, pupil passports, ILPs and EHCP coordination; works with pupils, families and external services; supports transition and monitors effectiveness. Works within time and support allocated by school leaders.
Class teachers	Identify and assess needs; take responsibility for progress and participation of every pupil in the class; plan, teach, adapt and review provision; involve children and families; coordinate teaching assistants and maintain accurate records. Remain accountable when support is delivered by others.
Teaching assistants / specialist support staff	Implement the teacher's planned approaches and interventions; encourage independence; observe and report progress and wellbeing; contribute to reviews; undertake relevant training; share concerns promptly with the teacher and SENDCo.
All school staff / club and visit leaders	Understand and follow relevant pupil strategies, medical and safeguarding information shared for their role; remove barriers, implement agreed adjustments, support inclusion and raise concerns promptly.
Parents and carers	Share relevant information and views; contribute to identifying priorities and reviewing outcomes; keep the school informed of changes; work collaboratively with the class teacher and SENDCo.
Pupils	Are supported to express what helps and what is difficult, help shape their targets and contribute to reviews and decisions in ways suitable for their age and communication needs.

13. Communication and partnership with parents and carers

Families are partners in understanding children's needs and deciding next steps. The first point of contact for concerns about progress, day-to-day adaptations and classroom support is normally the class teacher. If additional advice or coordination is needed, the teacher and parents can involve the SENDCo. Unresolved concerns may be raised with the Headteacher through the school's usual communication and complaints arrangements.

The school welcomes relevant independent professional reports provided by parents. Recommendations will be considered alongside other evidence and the school's duties and resources; receipt of a private report does not in itself determine a particular package of provision. Families can ask about Manchester's impartial SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

The school aims to communicate promptly, respectfully and accessibly. Arrangements for specific appointments with the SENDCo are coordinated through the school office, recognising the SENDCo's teaching and other commitments. Parent and pupil views are sought in reviews and decisions about changes to SEN Support.

14. Pupil voice

We seek children's views about their aspirations, learning, friendships, play, wellbeing and support. Pupil voice may be gathered through conversation, drawing, visual prompts, observation or communication tools, depending on a child's age and needs. Children are supported to understand and participate in decisions, including planning for transition.

15. Information sharing and confidentiality

SEND information is kept securely and accessed only by staff who need it to carry out their responsibilities. Information is shared with other settings and agencies appropriately, lawfully and with suitable transparency to families. The school follows its Data Protection Policy, relevant privacy notices and information governance procedures.

16. Monitoring, evaluation and governance

The Headteacher and SENDCo, working with class teachers and senior leaders, review the quality and impact of SEND provision. This includes attainment and progress, wider outcomes, independence, wellbeing, attendance, pupil and parent voice, quality of teaching, effectiveness of interventions, participation in enrichment and school life, and successful transitions.

The SENDCo provides regular strategic information to senior leaders and governors or trustees through the Trust's reporting arrangements, without unnecessary disclosure of identifiable pupil information. The named SEND link governor considers strengths, risks, provision and the impact of action taken, and provides proportionate challenge. Findings inform school improvement priorities, staff development and resource decisions.

17. Concerns and complaints

Parents are encouraged to raise concerns first with the class teacher and, where appropriate, the SENDCo. Concerns which cannot be resolved informally should follow the school or Trust's published Complaints Policy. This does not affect parents' separate statutory rights in relation to local authority EHC needs assessment decisions, EHCPs or SEND Tribunal appeals. Information on independent advice is available through Manchester SENDIASS.

18. Manchester Local Offer and school information

Manchester City Council publishes a Local Offer describing SEND-related education, health and social care services. St John's separately publishes its SEND Information Report on the school website, including the arrangements parents need to know about support, access, communication and concerns. Website information will be reviewed annually and updated promptly after material changes.

19. Review and approval

This policy will be reviewed by September 2027, or earlier if legislation, statutory guidance, Trust arrangements or school practice change significantly. Approval and the relevant approving body will be recorded in accordance with Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust's scheme of delegation. The school will also review its SEND Information Report at least annually.

Publication checks before approval

- Confirm the approving body and date under the Emmaus scheme of delegation.
- Confirm the named SENDCo and published parent contact route in the separate SEND Information Report.
- Check the school website links to the SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Complaints Policy, medical policy, Manchester Local Offer and SENDIASS.
- Confirm that the references to pupil passports, ILPs and termly reviews accurately describe the arrangements used in school.