



## SEND Policy

September 2025



# St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'*



## Intent

*"Inclusivity is a priority for all at St Aidan's; the school celebrates the uniqueness of the individual....the caring and positive environment that has developed in the school [ensures that] all students are held in high esteem" (Catholic Schools Inspectorate, 2023)*

Thank you for choosing St Aidan's Catholic Academy for your son's secondary education. We pride ourselves on delivering a holistic education that develops all pupils, ensuring that St Aidan's pupils grow into young men with character. It is our ambition that our pupils become citizens of the world that are well rounded, hardworking and compassionate.

Pupils with SEND or individual needs are integrated and included fully into the life of the school as a whole: We have very high aspirations for all pupils and always give the appropriate support to ensure that they thrive and achieve the highest possible academic outcomes. This support can come from within school or from external agencies. A strong pastoral system and numerous additional opportunities ensure that every pupil can succeed.

This policy is written in line with the requirements of:

*Children and Families Act 2014*

[SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) (S1 2014 1530 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, Part 3 Duties on Schools)

[SEND and alternative provision improvement plan](#) (2023)

Schedule 1 regulation 51 – Information to be included in our **SEND Information Report**

Schedule 2 regulation 53 – Sunderland Local Offer [Sunderland Local Authority Local Offer](#)

This policy must be read in conjunction our school policies. We believe that all pupils are entitled to access the same high-quality experience therefore this policy must be considered in particular alongside our **Family Handbook (2025)**. It must also be read alongside Sunderland Guidance-[Sunderland SEND Ranges 2019](#) (as explained by [Sunderland Parent Carer Forum Guide to the SEND Ranges.](#))

This policy was developed with the staff and governors of St. Aidan's. It is reviewed annually.

## SEND Team

The Academy encourages high aspirations, high motivation and high achievement for all. This vision applies equally to those with any kind of individual need. Our philosophy is to educate pupils as far as possible within the normal provision of the Academy. The majority of pupil needs will be met by high quality first wave classroom teaching with some targeted early intervention and individual attention for pupils who are having difficulty reaching the expected standards. Pupil progress is monitored closely and intervention for those who are not making expected progress is highly tailored and responsive to assessment data and needs. These interventions and individualised support are directed by the SEND Team.

The team comprise:

Mrs. G.Hogg – Senior Assistant Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and SEND Link

Mrs. C. Robinson – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo)



# St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'*



Ms. T. Thomas – Assistant SENDCo  
Mrs. E. Naile – Literacy Support Assistant.  
Ms. S. Tait – Teacher in charge of numeracy intervention  
Mrs. E. Frieberg – Sounds Write synthetic phonics teacher  
The SENDCo is based in Office 10.

## Definition of SEN

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** if he or she:

- (a) Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- (b) 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. [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) (p 15)

## Definition of disability

Many children and young people who have SEN may also 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'. This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial' [SEND Code of Practice 2015](#) (p16).

## Identification and Assessment

At St. Aidan's we have adopted a whole-school approach to the SEND policy and practice. Pupils identified as having SEND are, as far as is practicable, fully integrated into mainstream classes. Every effort is made to ensure that they have full access to the National Curriculum and are integrated into all aspects of academy life. The purpose of identification is to work out what action the school needs to take to support an individual pupil. The identification of the needs of a pupil considers the needs of the whole child and not just the SEND of the young person. Consideration will be given to the child's disability, attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, if they are Looked After by the Local Authority/Previously Looked After or a child of Service Personnel.

All teachers are responsible for identifying pupils with SEND and, in collaboration with the SENDCo, will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage. Regular assessment should ensure pupils with SEND can be identified effectively. Whether or not a pupil is making progress will also be a significant factor in considering the need for SEND provision.

## Early Identification:

Early identification of pupils with SEND is a priority. The academy will use appropriate screening and assessment tools to ascertain pupil progress, these include:

- Transition data/information provided by previous school/schools.



# St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'*



- Transition meetings and observations by the SENDCo.
- Evidence obtained by teacher observation/assessments.
- Their performance when judged against the appropriate National Tests.
- Standardised screening or assessment tools, for example the CAT 4 tests (GL Assessments) administered in year 7, reading and comprehension tests including the STAR reading test used alongside Accelerated Reader, Reading Plus and specific screeners including GL Dyslexia Screener.
- External support services may also play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for pupils with SEND.

On entry to the academy each pupil's attainment will be assessed in order to ensure continuity of learning from Primary School, or transference from another Secondary School.

For pupils with identified SEND, the Headteacher, SENDCo and pastoral colleagues will:

- Use information from the Primary School to shape the pupil's provision in the first few months.
- Ensure ongoing observations/assessments provide regular feedback on achievements/experiences, in order to plan steps in learning.

## **Monitoring Pupil Progress:**

Progress is a crucial factor in determining the need for additional support. Adequate progress is that which:

- Narrows the attainment gap between a pupil and peers.
- Prevents the attainment gap widening.
- Is equivalent to that of peers starting from the same baseline.
- Equals or improves upon the pupil's previous rate of progress.
- Ensures full curriculum access.
- Is likely to lead to Further Education training or employment.

Where teachers decide that a pupil is not progressing in line with expectations, the SENDCo along with other relevant staff within the academy will be informed. The staff involved will review the approaches adopted and plan additional support (if it is thought necessary). Where support additional to that of normal class provision is required, it will be provided through 'SEND School Support' (K).

## **K – School Support**

Pupils with additional needs are classed as K on the academy's SIMS system - School Support. They are identified as School Support if they have a diagnosed additional need or disability (as described by the four areas below), or if their attainment and/or progress falls short of age-related expectations. These needs should be within four broad areas including:

- Communication & Interaction: (including Speech, language & communication needs (SLCN), Autistic spectrum (AS))
- Cognition and Learning: (including Specific learning difficulties (SpLD) including dyslexia, dyscalculia and dysgraphia, Moderate learning difficulty (MLD), Severe learning difficulty



(SLD), *Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD)*).

- Social, Emotional and Mental Health: *(including Attention, deficit, hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Attachment disorder, Anxiety disorder, Mental health)*
- Sensory and/or Physical Needs: *(including Hearing impairment, Visual impairment, Multi-sensory impairment, Physical disability).*

It is important to note that pupils may fit into more than one of the areas of need.

School records of pupils identified as School Support are maintained by the SEND team. Parents are informed of any action the school proposes to take.

## Education, Health and Care Plans

An Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a legal document which offers a multi-agency approach to supporting a child or young person's needs up to the age of 25.

In rare cases, having taken all appropriate action to meet the learning needs of a pupil, those needs may remain substantial and the school may not be able to effectively meet them. Substantial is defined as Range 4 or above by the local authority ([Sunderland SEND Ranges 2019](#)). Range 4 is defined as the pupil having "significant" needs that cannot always be met in a mainstream provision. School may then consider applying for a formal assessment using the Sunderland guidance document ([Sunderland SEND Ranges 2019](#)). The school will be required to state clearly the reason for the referral and submit the following information:

- Recorded views of parents and where possible the pupil himself, on the earlier stages of assessment, action and support to date.
- Any relevant medical information.
- Where appropriate, evidence relating to Social Services involvement.
- Individual learning plans (ILPs) which provide an overview of the child's needs for staff and progress targets.
- Review of each individual ILP indicating decisions made as a result of progress towards targets.
- Evidence of involvement of outside specialists
- Evidence of costed provisions and spending
- Evidence that the child is range 4 or above.

Once the formal assessment is completed, an Education and Health Care Plan may or may not be issued.

## Graduated Response

**Wave 1** – Quality First teaching by all teaching staff

**Wave 2** - Is initiated when pupils have not achieved expected progress. Provision from within the school's resources is identified to help meet the pupil's needs. Please see the appendix (below) for further details on our interventions. Interventions may include:

- Additional intervention classes during DEAR time including Literacy (Phonics, Reading Plus, Handwriting, Writing) and Numeracy.
- Support using technology (for example accessing Docs Plus)
- Smaller group sessions including Friends.
- Modifications and adaptations such as using coloured paper/filters



- Access arrangements for assessments and formal examinations.
- Additional staff training and CPD
- Targeted support from LSAs in lessons, in liaison with class teacher.

**Wave 3** - where pupils fail to make expected progress despite additional provision at Wave 2, the school seeks advice and involvement from external support services. These may:

- Provide specialist assessments;
- Give advice on teaching strategies or materials;
- Provide short-term support or training for staff.

Individual Learning Plans are revised and reviewed. Should the assessments identify the need for additional provision on a regular basis for an extended period, then the school will apply for additional resources. If a pupil fails to make expected progress and is demonstrably at stage 4 the school and / or a parent / carer may decide to request that the LA undertake a statutory assessment.

## Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of school personnel with regard to individual needs are given below. They are in accordance with Code of Practice guidelines and academy role descriptions.

The Governing Body is responsible for:

- In partnership with the Headteacher, for deciding the school's general policy and approach to meet the needs of pupils with individual needs.
- Ensuring, through the appraisal process, that the Headteacher sets objectives and priorities in the school development plan, which includes provision for said needs.
- Monitoring the policy through the school's self-evaluation procedures.
- Ensuring all governors are informed of the school's provision, including funding, equipment and staffing.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Supporting the SENDCo to carry out his/her remit to a high standard
- Ensuring the SENDCo provides an annual report to the local Governing Body Safeguarding Committee.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Co-ordinating a pupil's provision across all curriculum areas, including their pastoral needs alongside Heads of Houses and the safeguarding team.
- Co-ordinating and implementing DEAR interventions and individualised programmes alongside Subject Leads.
- Additional testing, assessment and addressing parental concerns where appropriate.
- Decisions regarding changes to provision or the introduction of more intensive intervention or outside agency involvement where necessary.
- On-going monitoring of progress data.
- Co-ordinating and maintaining records including ILPs.
- Liaising with agencies including the BCCET Trust and outside agencies.

Subject Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring that appropriate curriculum provision and delivery is clearly stated in their schemes of work.
- Ensuring that appropriate teaching resources for pupils with needs are purchased from



school capitation by liaising with Heads of Department.

Intervention teachers are responsible for:

- Supporting pupils including those with identified individual needs.
- Planning and delivering individualised programmes and interventions in DEAR time.
- Monitoring progress against targets using Individual Learning Plans and Progress Reports.
- Working with individual pupils in classes where a short-term need has been identified under the direction of the teacher. They will also record and track that support.
- Liaising with classroom teachers.

The class teacher has overall responsibility.

Every teacher is a teacher of SEND and individual needs. Teachers will:

- Be familiar with the Individual Need profile of the school as shared at the start of each school term.
- Know their cohort, be able to identify all pupils with individual needs and be able to articulate why they are on the register.
- Have high expectations of the pupil and support them to reach their learning goals, making use of any support materials such as the individual learning plan (ILP) or specific documents such as Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs) or risk assessments.
- Consult with the SEND team regarding any subject specific needs or concerns.
- Consult with the SEND team regarding possible exam access arrangements.
- Read and respond to "round robins" or requests for information.
- Contribute to pupil ILPs as requested.
- Work with the SENDCo to accurately monitor and review the pupil's progress and identify the need for possible interventions.

## Individual Learning Plans and Reviews

*"Teachers receive clear information about pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND). They use this to help them to adapt lesson approaches when, for example, scaffolding pupils' attempts at writing" (Ofsted, 2023).*

Strategies employed with pupils are recorded in the school provision map reflecting provision that is additional to, or different from, normal differentiated provision. All pupils who are school support (K) have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and their progress monitored by class teachers and the SENDCo.

The ILP includes contributions from all staff, as well as parents and pupils themselves. We encourage parents to contribute via our parent questionnaires.

Contents of the Individual Learning Plan include:

- An outline of strengths and areas of need
- How to help the pupil
- Access Arrangement information
- Teaching strategies to be used
- Additional provision to be put in place
- Subject specific targets and strategies.

The ILP will be communicated to all staff who support the pupil's learning, their parents and the pupil themselves.

- ILPs are reviewed via:



Formal annual reviews – these are held virtually or in person depending on parental preference. This meeting will include the child (if appropriate), parents/carers and any other professionals working with the child.

Pupil progress is formally reviewed at three assessment points throughout the year and ILPs adapted if needed or requested (for example, by the pupil).

Cycle targets are sent once every cycle to share academic targets with parents and pupils.

The SENDCo attends all parents' evenings and we operate an "open door" policy where parents (or pupils) can request a review when needed.

An ILP will also be reviewed following the involvement and recommendations of outside agencies.

The code of practice is reviewed on a termly basis.

## **Support for Improving Emotional and Social Development**

The school has both a [Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy](#) and [Anti-Bullying Policy](#). These are both regularly reviewed. The SEND team work very closely with class teachers and pastoral staff to ensure that pupils feel safe and supported at all times. We offer open door policy at both lunch and break times so that pupils can access a safe space and speak to SEND staff when needed. We are also available before and after school and pupils can have access to specific staff detailed in ILPs as emotional support. The SENDCo is a trained Mental Health First Aider and both members of the team have iCAMHS accreditation.

The school is able to offer a number of services and sign post alternative services.

- Form Tutor Support
- Staff mentoring
- Head of House Support
- Support from school Chaplain
- Peer Mentoring (once trained)
- Mental Health First Aiders
- PDE
- Regular updating of school website 'Physical and Mental Health Support'
- Promotion through Assembly
- Enrichment Curriculum
- Wellbeing week (Week 13 of each Cycle)

Outside Agencies:

- Emotional and Resilience Nurse. 1:1 or Group work
- School Nurse
- Washington MIND, 1:1 or Group work
- Anna Freud, 1:1
- GP
- Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Early Help
- Safeguarding, LA

We also recognise that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has the mental health of pupils and we work closely with those pupils and parents who have been impacted and have adapted provision to their needs.

## **In-service Training and CPD**

The SENDCo provides training for ECTs and other new staff at the school. Individual departments can ask for support from the SENDCO as required, for specific purposes or generic training.



# St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'*



Whole-school training is focused on specific needs and specific pupils is provided as and when needed. For example, if we have a pupil with a hearing impairment we will run a bespoke session for that pupils' teachers with myself and the hearing impairment service so that they can understand that boys' needs. We have also had an increased focus on Autism training this year reflecting the cohort's needs.

Academy priority sessions every half term also include regular SEND training according to that cycle's focus: For example, this year we have included training on Sounds Write, Cognition and Learning, Subjects Specific Strategies and high needs pupils. We also include training on the science of learning which supports the scaffolding of SEND learners in the classroom.

The SENDCo has both a Masters in SEND and the National SENDCo Award, in addition to training such as NVQ Level 2 in Autism Awareness. The SENDCo and Assistant SENDCo take part in regular CPD and trust wide training, including Sounds Write Synthetics Phonics Training and also Mental Health First Aid Training.

Intervention staff take regular part in whole staff training as well as specialist training such as Sounds Write Advanced.

Eight of our staff have taken part in Sounds Write Synthetic Phonics training (teachers and support staff) and all of our pastoral team and senior leadership team are now qualified Mental Health First Aiders.

## Parents

St. Aidan's actively seeks to work with parents / carers and values the contributions they make. Parental views are recorded as part of the Review procedures and all parents are encouraged to attend Parents' Evenings where their child's progress is discussed with subject teachers and the SENDCo is also available. We encourage parents to contribute towards their son's ILPs and to respond to SEND questionnaires. We encourage parents to always make contact either with Heads of Houses or the SENDCo at [crobinson@staca.co.uk](mailto:crobinson@staca.co.uk) if any issues or concerns arise.

## Pupils

St. Aidan's acknowledges the pupil's role as a partner in his own education. They are actively encouraged to be involved in decision making by attending all reviews and to be involved with negotiating and evaluating their targets, where appropriate.

Their views are recorded as part of the review process and their views are valued and listened to. Pupil voice is also incorporated into ILPs and captured via pupil questionnaires at review.

## Transfer Arrangements

All documentation about individual needs in a pupil's record is transferred between educational establishments. The SENDCo deals with specific enquiries.

Additional induction days are arranged as required for those with need or vulnerability factors.

The records of pupils who leave at the end of Year 11 are stored in the academy, unless requested by a Key Stage 5 placement, until the age of 25.

Documentation relevant to the last Review is forwarded to Post 16 placements.

## Exiting the SEND register



# St Aidan's Catholic Academy

*'We believe that God has created each person to celebrate life to the full'*



The academy's SEND register is tracked on a termly basis. When pupils have made sufficient progress to exit the register this is discussed with link staff and parents. The pupil is then removed from the register and staff notified.

## Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions

Please see St. Aidan's [Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Policy](#).

## Complaints

In the first instance complaints should be addressed via the SENDCo or the Headteacher. This will then be addressed in accordance with [St. Aidan's complaints procedure](#).

## Monitoring and Evaluation of this Policy

The policy will be evaluated using the following indicators:

- Recorded views of pupils and parents / carers
- Recorded views by teachers on pupils' competence, confidence and social acceptability.
- Measurable or observable gains from pupils, particularly in terms of set targets, screening tests and other assessments carried out where appropriate and examination results.
- Evidence of planning and targeted expenditure for SEND.
- The SENDCo reviewing procedures in consultation with subject leaders, and outside agencies.
- Feedback from departments.

## Policy Review

This policy document will be reviewed in June 2026.

Signed by:

Dr C Emmerson  
June 2026  
Chair of Governors



## Appendix:

### Supporting Individual Needs

The SEND team has a core of Claire Robinson (SENDCo). She works alongside the assistant SENDCo, pastoral team, classroom teachers, support staff and outside agencies to help pupils with individual needs.

### We support the needs of pupils in the following ways:

#### 1. Attendance and Punctuality

Good attendance, and being on time every morning, is very important. When a pupil is in school they have the best possible chance of learning and making progress. Absence and/or lateness can cause gaps in learning and may mean that they fail to meet their potential. This is particularly the case when pupils with individual needs are absent.

Attendance will then aim to contact all pupils on their first day of absence by telephone, in accordance with the attendance policy.

This will be logged on the school attendance spreadsheet.

If we have persistent absence the SEND Team will then contact again and work with the attendance team to arrange a review and see what support can be put in place to approve attendance. This is especially pertinent following the Covid-19 pandemic and we are working closely with local authority agencies to support attendance.

*Please read alongside our attendance policy.*

#### 2. Homework

At St. Aidan's homework is one of our 6 learning habits. As a team we believe that all pupils with individual needs have the right to complete and access homework. We have the same high expectations of pupils with individual needs as any other pupil. We support the pupils with their homework and organisation at

- a) Before school homework club (multi-media room 8 – 8.25 am)
- b) After school homework support

Support for year 7 parents with homework is offered via our Year 7 information day, which is held early in the first term.

Parents can also contact the team directly at [crobinson@staca.co.uk](mailto:crobinson@staca.co.uk)/[rlannon@staca.co.uk](mailto:rlannon@staca.co.uk) if they have specific homework queries.

#### 3. In- class support – Learning Support Assistants

In some cases, pupils with individual needs will receive targeted support from one of the team in classroom lessons. The support timetable will be communicated to teaching staff and the support assistants will work under the direction of the class teacher to help deliver quality first teaching. A member of support staff will support the learning needs of the pupils and to help them access the curriculum. This support will be tracked and monitored.

#### 4. Literacy Interventions

At St. Aidan's Catholic Academy we believe that for all pupils to succeed, whatever their ability or individual needs, they must have the language and numeracy skills to access and explore the wider curriculum. This will give them the potential to learn and grow as individuals. It is our belief that all children have the right to access quality first teaching and the majority of pupils will have their individual needs addressed by their classroom teacher. Pupils with individual needs are



entitled to the same curriculum as other pupils but may need more practice to embed particular skills (**Ofsted, 2021**). The Individual Needs Department therefore support pupils by offering interventions during DEAR time, after school and in a limited number of lesson withdrawals.

*Please read alongside the school's Literacy policy.*

At St. Aidan's reading is given the utmost importance and we enrich their reading experience through DEAR, DEAR Aloud and innovations such as Scholarly Reading. This helps to develop a love of reading and expand pupils' academic vocabulary.

It is important that all pupils are allowed to experience this but especially for those pupils who are the lowest 20% of readers. **Ofsted (2021)** found that in their most successful schools not only was reading a top priority but there was a "sense of urgency in addressing the reading needs of the lowest 20%". Pupils were not removed from the school's reading programme but given extensive support to access it.

This will help pupils to develop fluency.

Individual Reading Needs are identified by regular assessment using both Accelerated Reader and NGRT reading test.

Pupils will then be offered reading interventions at an appropriate level based around the use of synthetic phonics. This will be delivered via bespoke intervention (using programmes including Sound-Write and No Nonsense spelling), Lexia and Reading Plus. The primary aim of this intervention is to ensure that students can fully access the literacy demands of the curriculum as soon as possible. These students will have their Reading Ages monitored 6 times over the course of the year - more regularly than our standard 3.

In addition to reading interventions, we will also offer handwriting interventions and extended writing interventions, based upon assessment of need.

This support will be planned and delivered by Claire Robinson, Emma Naille and Mrs. Freiberg (Literacy).

## 5. Numeracy Interventions

Within the curriculum, numeracy support is rigorous and sequential to support the needs of individuals (with particular attention on pupils who do not meet the national expectation at KS2). As in literacy, the department offer support by using interventions during our 30-minute DEAR slot.

For some pupils, numeracy is a barrier to learning and it is important that these pupils receive support. They will do an individualised programme or work in a very small group, twice a week on maths sessions that will identify their gaps in mathematical knowledge and skills and work on their Foundation knowledge. Year 7 and 8 pupils work with Mr. Rathore on knowledge gaps in groups of less than 10. They are given a baseline test based on the curriculum and they are then taught bespoke lessons on those missing skills.

This support will be planned and delivered by Ms. Tait (Maths teacher).

## 6. Support for specific difficulties

We also provide support for dysgraphia and dyspraxia with our Frostig/Handwriting groups. These again take place during our DEAR slots and small groups of pupils work on their fine motor skills using either the Frostig Programme or individualised handwriting materials, following our tiered handwriting intervention.