

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS and DISABILITY POLICY



St Paul's Steiner School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Vision Statement and Aims

Our school is a Steiner School where each pupil is valued for his/her uniqueness and is encouraged to develop into the best that he/she can be.

Through teaching the Steiner curriculum, we provide the foundation for the children to develop a relationship with the world, which is one of reverence, tolerance, and imagination.

Children are caring towards others; aware of their responsibilities and encouraged to make considered choices to promote their own and the community's well-being.

Our parents are a vital and valued part of school life. We would like them to work in partnership with the school to promote and encourage their children's learning and development.

As an independent school, we are currently under no statutory obligation to follow the DfE Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. However, we recognise its importance and our SEND Policy respects its recommendations for good practice and works to integrate them with the aims of the International Waldorf Curriculum. Following the Code of Practice enables us to work with the Local Education Authorities and to follow the national guidelines for statutory assessment.

It also simplifies the transfer of children, including children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to other schools (including Special Schools) should that be required.

This policy accepts the definition of SEND (as set out below) in the Revised Code of Practice 2015.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is owed to disabled people only.

The broad areas of need for which we may need to plan intervention are:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

Under the Equality Act 2010, all Early Years' providers have duties. Although formal learning is not yet introduced, a lead person will monitor a child's progress in the above areas.

Where a setting identifies a child as having SEN they will work in partnership with parents to establish the support the child needs.

Aims and Objectives

The Trustees and teaching staff will do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has Special Educational Needs or disability, including children with an EHCP, and ensure that those needs will be made known to all who are likely to teach them.

This policy aims to 'inform and guide practice and to ensure that measures are in place to be inclusive and responsive to the needs of all children and their families in an equitable way'. (Coordinating Special Educational Needs – Fitzgerald 2007)

The SENCo, class teachers, kindergarten teachers and learning support teachers will draw up an annual report to parents, reflecting on the policy and effectiveness of the school's work with pupils with special educational needs.

No pupil should be discriminated against, harassed or victimised due to their disability. The school will take such steps as it is reasonable to take for disabled children, to prevent them being put at substantial disadvantage.

The staff will make such adjustments as it is reasonable to make to ensure that pupils with special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, participate fully in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have special educational needs.

Responsible Persons

The School consults Julia Rowlandson (SpLD Consultant and trainer) as necessary to advise in this area.

The people co-ordinating the day to day provision of education for pupils with special educational needs are: Annina McCormick (SENCo), Kate Armstrong (Learning Support Teacher) and Eva Wildin (High Level Learning Support Assistant).

The Learning Support Teacher and Assistant, Class and subject Teachers, Kindergarten Teachers, Teaching Assistants and curative practitioners, work co-operatively with the SENCo.

The SENCo is responsible for:

- The day to day operation of the SEND policy
- Liaising with, and advising, members of staff about children with SEND
- Co-ordinating provision for children with SEND, including those with an EHCP
- Advising on the graduated approach to providing SEN support

- Supporting the class or subject teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on the effective implementation of support.
- Maintaining the SEND register and overseeing records, including IEPs, minutes of meetings and reviews and discussions with parents, teachers or the school doctor and details of therapeutic interventions
- Advising on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Liaising with parents of children with SEND, including children with an EHCP, or arranging that Class Teachers do so
- Liaising with early years providers, other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals and independent or voluntary bodies
- Being a key point of contact with external agencies, especially the local authority and its support services, liaising with potential next providers of education to ensure a pupil and their parents are informed about options and a smooth transition is planned, especially for pupils with an EHCP
- Contributing to in-service training of staff

Admission and Inclusion

St Paul's adopts a 'whole school approach' to special educational needs which involves all the staff adhering to a model of good practice. The staff of the school are committed to identifying and providing for the needs of all children in a wholly inclusive environment within the scope of the steps it is reasonable for the School to take. The school operates an equal opportunities policy for children with special educational needs who are afforded the same rights as other children.

This includes both those children with an Education, Health and Care Plan, and those others with less significant problems.

Admission of children to the school with additional needs that have been identified or are becoming apparent

Treating every child as an individual is important to us, and we value diversity. We welcome pupils with special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, providing that our staff can provide them with the support and resources they need to make progress. We will 'use our best endeavours' to make sure that a child with special educational needs gets the support they need. It must be noted that the location of the school in an old church does not make it possible to create accessibility plans for physically disabled pupils/wheelchair users.

For admission to the Kindergarten, in addition to the initial interview, the parents of a child with known or probable SEND, including a child with an EHCP, are required to provide information about the child's needs (including reports from child care practitioners and/or other specialists). A second interview with the child and parents may be requested to assess the levels of difficulties the child is experiencing and whether Kindergarten can adequately meet the child's needs.

If we feel that the school cannot meet the specific needs, a place in Kindergarten does not mean that the child will automatically be offered a place in Class I where more formal learning in larger groups starts.

For admission to the Lower and Middle school, in addition to the normal admission procedures, a child with known or probable SEND will have an interview with the SENCo or other curative diagnostic specialist. The interview will be arranged through the school office, once the Learning Support Department has received all relevant reports, and, if applicable, the Education, Health and Care Plan.

The school will advise against accepting children if, after the assessment, it is felt that the school does not have the necessary resources to educate the child, either in terms of staff expertise or practical support.

Identification of children with SEND within St Paul's

Regular and routine observation and screening procedures take place according to an established timetable. The results provide an overview of the pattern of attainment in basic skills for each class and aim to identify the presence of specific learning difficulties. The results are used by Class Teachers and Learning Support staff to enable appropriate planning and differentiation in an inclusive classroom.

Children who show signs of possible SEND may be recommended for further assessment by an appropriate specialist in order to determine their learning needs. The cost of such assessments is expected to be met by the parents.

A trigger for this could be:

- A teacher's concern about a child's behaviour, attention or learning abilities
- A parent's concern about a child's behaviour, attention or learning abilities
- The school doctor's concern about a child's behaviour, attention or learning abilities
- The result of a class observation
- As a result of class screening at Class II, III, IV, V, VI, VII or VIII

Assessments allow the pupil to show what he/she knows, understands and can do, as well as to identify any learning difficulties. Where appropriate, pupils will be referred to the SENCo or learning support staff for initial diagnostic testing to construct a profile of their strengths and weaknesses.

SEND Register

Pupils with specific learning difficulties will be listed on a SEND Register. The SENCO will amend the register following pupil progress meetings and after analysis of whole school assessment data. A pupil may be removed from the list if his/her attainment lies within that expected for their age.

It is essential that parents / carers are involved in any discussions prior to changes to the register being made. Regular structured communication with parents will be set up by the SENCO. This register is a working document and will be re-circulated to all staff as and when any changes occur.

Teaching is of a high quality, soundly based on the Steiner curriculum and differentiated to individual needs. Our philosophy works towards promoting positive outcomes in the wider areas of personal and social development. Extra support for children with special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, may be made available in the form of:

- In-class support
- Withdrawal for individual/small group work
- Home/school reading schemes
- Behaviour modification programmes
- Use of specialist equipment
- Alternative teaching strategies

The structure of the Steiner curriculum enables tasks and activities to be broken down into a series of small and achievable steps for pupils who have marked learning difficulties. The practice of class teachers moving up through the classes with their pupils means that they can remain responsible for working with the child on a daily basis. Where the interventions involve group or one-to-one teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they will still retain responsibility for the pupil. They work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching.

Where pupils have special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, a graduated response will be adopted. This is defined in the revised Code of Practice 2015 as 'a cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with the growing understanding of pupils' needs and of what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes.' The school will, in other than exceptional cases, make full use of classroom and school resources before drawing on external support.

A provision map and learning plan will be drawn up.

The school recognises the importance of parents being involved at every stage.

The school will make provision for pupils with special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, to match the nature of their individual needs and the class teacher and SENCO will keep regular records of the pupils' special educational needs, the action taken and the outcomes.

If a pupil does not make progress despite the school taking the action outlined, advice will be sought from the appropriate support services, following consultation with parents.

Regular liaison will be maintained with any of the following external agencies for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans:

- Psychological Services
- Social Services
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Audiology Service
- Speech and Language Service
- Service for the Visually Impaired
- Health Service
- Welfare Service

- Early Years Service
- Education Out of School Services
- Looked After Children officer
- Special Education Section
- Parent Partnership Service

If progress is still not achieved despite extra learning support, the child may be assessed according to the LA criteria, with a view to initiating a statutory assessment of special educational needs under the 1996 Education Act. The appropriate forms will be used for recording and referral as necessary. A request for statutory assessment can be initiated either by the parents or the school.

The progress of children with special educational needs will be closely monitored and reviews will be held half-termly initially and then termly regularly in meetings with the SENCO, parents and relevant teachers. As suggested in the Revised Code of Practice, these discussions should be led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the pupil who is aware of their needs and attainment. This will usually be the class teacher, supported by the SENCO. Target planning will follow the Assess - Plan – Do – Review cycle.

Additionally, the progress of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be reviewed annually, as required by legislation.

Pupil Participation

The school will work to ensure that pupils have an age appropriate awareness of their learning targets.

Record keeping

Confidential detailed records will be kept of the pupils receiving extra teaching support. These will include:

- Child's details, DOB, position in family, address, contact details.
- Educational history
- Any history of SEND in family
- IEPs or any learning plans
- Medical records
- Progress reports, school reports, Standardised test results
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of any intervention the child has received
- Copies of invoices for any extra intervention
- Notification of meeting dates and acknowledgements
- Minutes from SENCO, class teacher, parents' meetings
- Notes on conversations
- Emails, letters
- Documents relating to any behavioural issues
- Samples of school work

Parent / School Partnership

The school will actively seek the involvement of parents in the education of their children. It is recognised that it is particularly important with pupils who have special educational needs, including children with an EHCP, where the support and encouragement of parents is often a significant factor in achieving success. Parents will always be kept informed about the special educational needs experienced by their children in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the Code of Practice. Communications between the parents and the school will be consistently maintained through a timetable of meetings of which detailed records will be kept.

Parents will be fully consulted before the involvement of LA support agencies or any other external specialist with their children, and will be invited to attend any formal review meetings at all stages. The school and parents may need to consider if specific remediation can be supported by the current resourcing levels of the School and that it is in line with the educational philosophy of the school.

School Links and Transition

The Steiner Waldorf schools work closely together to maintain a consistent approach to pupils with special educational needs and to share relevant information and effective strategies.

Children with SEND, including children with an EHCP, who transfer to another setting will have a transition plan drawn up with the teacher, parents and SENCo. Confidential information will only be shared on a need to know basis with permission from the parents. Child protection issues are exempted.

Reasonable Adjustments

Independent Schools cannot charge for reasonable adjustments (which now include auxiliary aids and services) under the Equality Act 2010. The school will give careful consideration as to whether an adjustment or auxiliary aid or service sought for a disabled pupil, including a child with an EHCP, is a reasonable adjustment.

The school is entitled to consider cost as a factor when determining whether the auxiliary aid or service or reasonable adjustment is reasonable.

The school will apply the Equality and Human Rights Guidance entitled: Reasonable Adjustment for Disabled Pupils, which can be found at the EHRC website.

Concerns and Complaints

The procedure for managing concerns is explained in Appendix A. If you have a complaint, please refer to the school's Complaints and Concerns Policy.

Staff Development

In-service training needs related to special educational needs and disabilities will be identified by the staff at College, early years' and teachers' meetings and will be incorporated into the staff

development plan. This includes reviewing, and where necessary improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEN most frequently encountered.

Evaluating Success

This school policy will be kept under regular review. The SENCo, Learning support staff, early years teachers and class teachers will gauge the success of the policy by the achievements of previously agreed targets outlined in the pupils' learning plans, progress review and/or annual review. They will advise the Trustees of any individual cases of which they need to be made aware. In addition, evidence will be gathered regarding:

- Staff awareness of individual pupil need
- Success of the identification process at an early stage
- Academic progress of pupils with special educational needs
- Improved behaviour of the children, where this is appropriate
- Consultation with parents

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Appendix A

Procedure for Managing SEN Concerns

Responsible person for SEN is a named Trustee and the SENCo.

Interview for Kindergarten

Parents provide information about their child's special educational needs including any reports from any external agencies. A second interview may be requested with the child and parents to conduct an assessment. A Kindergarten place will not be offered if the school is not deemed the best placement as it cannot offer the necessary support.

Lower, Middle school admissions; a child with known or probable SEN will have an interview with SENCo or other specialist once relevant reports are received. If the interviewing teacher has a concern about possible SEN, they will refer the child to the SENCo for further investigation. The Admissions Mandate Holder will advise against accepting a child if, after consultation, it is felt that the school does not have the necessary resources to educate the child, in terms of staff expertise or the practical support.

Recognising Special Educational Needs

- A parent or teacher's concern about a child's behaviour, attention or learning difference
- As a result of a class observation or screening at Class II, IV, VI or VIII.

A concern is raised and registered with the SENCo. SENCo and Class Teacher meet to make a plan for targeted differentiation in the class and support at home. Parents are informed.

If differentiation in class is not successful, the Class Teacher, SENCo and the parents meet to draw up an IEP for learning support. The child will then be entered on the SEND register for monitoring.

Children who show signs of possible SEND may be recommended for further assessment by an appropriate specialist in order to determine their learning needs. Any external assessment must be paid for by parents.

If no progress is made, advice will be sought to access external specialist input and the child will be entered on the register of SEN support.

If progress is still not achieved a request for statutory assessment from their Local Authority can be initiated by parents or the school.

Reviews take place half termly then termly in meetings with SENCo, parents and relevant teachers. At this time it will be decided if sufficient progress has been made or if further intervention is required.

Children with a *Statement of Special Educational Needs* or an *Educational, Health and Care Plan* (EHCP) will be reviewed annually as required by legislation.

Children with SEND and/or Statements/EHCPs who transfer to another setting have a transition plan drawn up by the class teacher, SENCo and parents. Confidential information will be shared on a need to know basis with parental consent.

The SENCo will keep case study files and make Trustees aware of any potential difficulties with transfer.