



St Matthew's Primary School

Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

Date Policy Written: July 2025

Review Cycle: Annual basis or sooner if required.

Ratified by Governing Board on: 14th July 2025

Next review date: July 2026

This Policy must be read in conjunction with:

- SEND Information Report
- Behaviour Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Equality Policy
- Luton Borough Council Local Offer

Opening Statement

St Matthew's Primary School is committed to inclusion. We are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education for all the children attending our school. Provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities is a matter for the school as a whole. In addition to the Governing Body, the Headteacher, Leadership Team and all other members of staff, both teaching and support staff, have important day-to-day responsibilities. Under the terms of the Teachers' Standards (2012) all teachers are teachers of children with special educational needs. Teaching such children is therefore a whole school responsibility.

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools. We recognise that pupils learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, emotional state, age and life experiences. We believe that many pupils, at some time in their school career, may experience difficulties which affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term. We aim to identify these needs promptly as they arise and provide teaching and learning contexts which enable every child to achieve his or her potential.

St Matthew's Primary School recognises that children with SEND can include those with learning difficulties, communication difficulties, social, emotional and / or behavioural difficulties, sensory impairments or physical disabilities. We believe that inclusive education is about equal opportunities to all learners, whatever their age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. We will achieve this by responding to learners in ways which take account of their varied life experiences and needs.

St Matthew's Primary School recognises that there is a significant overlap between children with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs (SEN). However, whilst many children with SEN may have a disability, children with disabilities do not all necessarily have SEN. It is only when a child with a disability requires special educational provision that they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

Our practice and procedures are outlined in our SEND Information Report so this policy should be read in conjunction with this. This SEND Policy works alongside and in conjunction with the 'Local Offer' offered by Luton Borough Council Local Authority.

Aims and objectives

Our SEND policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will support and make provision for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND

As a school we aim to:

- Identify all children with SEND as early as possible
- Facilitate the development of children with SEND and help them to achieve the best possible outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood
- Work in full partnership with parents, taking into account their views and keeping them informed of their child's needs and progress
- Take into account the views, wishes and feelings of the child wherever possible and where age appropriate

As a school our objectives are to:

- To ensure Quality First Teaching includes and supports progress of all children
- Provide appropriate high quality intervention to meet the needs of all pupils
- To ensure a clear process for identifying, assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing provision for SEND pupils
- To promote the voice of the pupil and their family in all decisions about ongoing provision and support
- Continually monitor and review the progress of children with SEND, making necessary adjustments to provision where required in order to improve outcomes
- Ensure a climate of warmth and sensitivity exists amongst staff and pupils through a strong, positive ethos and emotionally literate environment
- Plan and deliver training for all staff groups to ensure continued professional development of skills to meet the needs of all pupils
- To develop and manage effective whole school provision for SEND ensuring good or better progress from individual starting points
- To work in partnership with outside agencies

Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) and the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEN and disabilities
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out schools' responsibilities for Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, SEN coordinators (SENDCOs) and the SEND information report

Definition of Special Educational Needs

A pupil has SEN if they have a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have a **significantly greater difficulty** in learning than the majority of children the same age
- Have a **disability**, which prevents or hinders the child from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in schools maintained by the Local Authority, other than special schools, in the area

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty or disability solely based on English as an Additional Language.

Roles and Responsibilities

The SENDCO is: **John Harper**

They will:

- Work with the Headteacher, Assistant Head for Inclusion and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the coordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and work with staff, parents and other agencies to ensure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services

- Liaise with potential next providers of education to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regards to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Ensure the school keeps the records of all pupil with SEND up to date

Assistant Head for Inclusion: **Natalie Crawford**

The Assistant Head is the Inclusion Team representative on the Senior Leadership Team. They work alongside the SENDCo to form the Inclusion Team. They are responsible for leading on SEND, including the effectiveness of the SENDCo as well as monitoring and evaluating the impact of SEN provision in school.

SEND/Inclusion Governor: **Jackie Chidwick**

They will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND and disability provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the Headteacher Assistant Head for Inclusion and SENDCo to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

Headteacher: **Jane Thomas**

They will:

- Work with the SENDCo, Assistant Head for Inclusion and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Have overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability

Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENDCo to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision

- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy

Year Group Leader

Each year group leader is responsible for:

- Understanding the SEND profile of their year group
- The progress and development of every pupil in their year group
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy

Subject leaders

Additionally, each subject leader is responsible for:

- Monitoring progress of all pupils in their curriculum subject, including pupils with SEND
- Monitoring of quality inclusive teaching and provision for SEND
- Ensuring the curriculum is inclusive for all
- Working with the SENDCo to review provision in place for subjects

Curriculum Provision

Our school currently provides additional and/or different provision for a range of needs, including:

- Communication and interaction, for example, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, speech and language difficulties
- Cognition and learning, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy
- Moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties, for example, Fragile X Syndrome, Prader Willi Syndrome

Identifying pupils with SEN and assessing their needs

At the heart of the work of every school is a continuous cycle of planning, teaching, assessing and reviewing which takes account of the wide range of abilities, aptitudes and interests of children.

For some children whose overall attainment or attainment within specific subjects falls significantly outside the expected range, educational provision that is additional to or different from what is usually provided may be required. This is known as special educational provision and it is underpinned by high quality teaching. High quality teaching that is structured to enable all to access and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of children who will learn and progress within these arrangements. Class teachers will make regular assessments of progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

- Is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline
- Fails to match or better the child's previous rate of progress
- Fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- Widens the attainment gap

This may include progress in areas other than academic subjects, for example, social needs.

Teachers must use their best endeavours to ensure that such provision is made for those who need it. Whilst special educational provision does not necessarily mean that a child has special educational needs, it could be a very good indicator. Slow progress and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND.

When deciding whether special educational provision is required, we will start with the desired outcomes, including the expected progress and attainment, and the views and the wishes of the pupil and their parents. We will use this to determine the support that is needed and whether we can provide it by adapting our core offer, or whether something different or additional is needed.

The identification of SEND is embedded in the whole school process of monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. As part of this process, staff have structured opportunities to raise concerns at termly provision map meetings with the SENDCo, where the needs and progress of all children are discussed. Additionally,

emerging SEND concerns can be raised at any point through logging on CPOMS or through attending the weekly drop-in sessions with the SENDCo.

The Graduated Approach

At St Matthew's we use the Graduated Approach, a four part cycle revisiting earlier decisions and actions, refining and revising them, to inform whether further special educational provision is needed.

Many children experience barriers to learning for a variety of reasons and as a result, may not achieve their full potential or make expected progress at times. For these children, early identification is key. Barriers to learning will be quickly identified by teaching and support staff who will offer high quality teaching through differentiated work or teaching strategies in an attempt to overcome any difficulties.

The achievement and progress of these children will be carefully tracked on a weekly and even daily basis to ensure that the differentiated work and strategies being provided are having the maximum effect in removing the children's barriers to learning. At this stage, regular interaction with parents is vital and good communication should facilitate an accurate picture of the child's progress.

If there are ongoing concerns about a child not making progress, these will be highlighted to the SENDCo by the class teacher through: on-going teacher assessments, termly pupil progress meetings, regularly updated Provision Map identification and through the logging of concerns on CPOMS or attending drop-ins.

At this stage, the Inclusion Team will assist teaching and support staff in the identification of the children's barriers to learning, offering further expertise in enabling access to learning and appropriate teaching strategies to ensure that special educational provision accurately meets the children's needs and facilitates greater achievement or enhanced progress.

The achievement and progress of these children will be monitored over an agreed period; this is usually over a half-term or a term and takes place through the school's graduated approach. During this time and wherever necessary, adjustments will be made to the support available in order to facilitate greater success. Parents will continue to be kept fully informed of their child's progress.

When children who have been in receipt of special educational provision still do not make acceptable progress, there may be evidence to suggest that they have a

Special Educational Need. At this stage, the Inclusion Team will consult with teachers, support staff and parents to arrange appropriate intensive 'additional SEN support' in any or all of the following areas of need as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014):

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



SEND Register

When children are identified as requiring 'additional SEN support' they are included on the school's SEND register. Parents/ Carers must be informed of this. In order to offer the most suitable provision to meet the needs of children requiring this level of support, specialist services and teachers with additional specialist qualifications may

be called upon for advice or to provide intensive specific programmes to be followed.

The progress of these children will be rigorously monitored throughout the year through the Graduated Approach and carefully evaluated by teachers, Senior Leaders and Inclusion Team. Parents are regularly informed of their child's progress and supported in facilitating further progress at home.

Removing children from the SEND Register

When a child has made sufficient and sustained progress towards achieving their personalised targets, and it is felt that they are able to maintain this with Quality First Teaching within the classroom, they may be removed from the SEND Register. Before this occurs, careful assessment and a period of monitoring will occur. This decision will be made by school staff in conjunction with parents and/or carers. Once removed from the register, school staff will continue to monitor pupils to ensure good progress is maintained.

Special Educational Provision and Support

At St Matthew's we advocate the power of providing quality first teaching and reasonable adjustments, which can meet the needs of some children with SEN. All children are considered on a class provision map which records any identified needs or concerns that teachers update every term. Provision maps provide continual monitoring throughout the year recording anything children may need that is "different from or additional to".

Those children who require more specialised and individual input or have targets from an outside agency have an Individual Plan. These are put in place to document and facilitate the effective implementation of special educational provision, which focuses on the removal of barriers to learning. In line with the Code of Practice, Individual Plans are reviewed at least three times throughout the year. Pupils and parents are involved in both the review and target setting and IP targets may be amended following consultation.

The support children receive will vary and will be based on their individual needs. This may include sessions both in and out of the class and may be in the form of:

- Specific strategies to enable them to access class work
- One-to-one adult support

- Group work

Where the pupil has made sufficient progress and therefore no longer requires additional or different action, they are monitored for one term prior to removal from an Individual Plan. Monitoring will then continue for a prolonged period before removing them from the Special Educational Needs register, however, they would continue to be monitored on the class provision map should anything change.

Education Health Care Plans (EHCP)

Should children receiving 'additional SEN support' still not make progress at an acceptable rate and require long-term support, the formal assessment procedures for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan may be started. A child with an EHC Plan benefits from further funding to meet their educational, health and / or care needs.

The process of applying for statutory assessment towards an EHC Plan will be started by the Inclusion Team and will be undertaken in conjunction with parents and other Specialist Services, who must all follow the legal procedures outlined in the Local Offer by Luton Borough Council Local Authority. It is also possible for a parent to apply for an EHC Plan directly should they wish to. Where the Local Authority agrees to issue an EHC Plan, the school will comply with the statutory requirements set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2014).

Support for children who have an EHC Plan is recorded on a Provision Map and in greater detail on the child's 'Individual Plan', which clearly indicates how the school intends to support their progress in their specific area(s) of need. As with children identified as 'SEN Support' the support children receive will vary and will be based on their individual needs and as is outlined in their EHC Plan. This may include sessions both in and out of the class and may be in the form of:

- Personalised Curriculum
- One-to-one adult support
- Small Group work
- Inclusion in our Wave 3 complex needs intervention (see Appendix 1 for more details)

For all children with an EHC Plan, there will be an Annual Review, chaired by the SENDCo, to review the appropriateness of the provision and to recommend to the

Local Authority whether any changes needs to be made, either to the Education, Health and Care Plan or to the funding arrangements for the child.

SEND Funding

SEND funding is allocated to the school by the Local Authority via the formula budget. Additional funding is also allocated for children who have an EHC Plan. This funding is used to provide children with SEND the additional resources required to meet their learning needs. This may include employing teaching assistants and purchasing specialist teaching materials.

Pupil Premium Grant

Many children at St Matthew's Primary School receive an allocation of monies known as the Pupil Premium Grant. This funding is provided to schools for children who are entitled to Free School Meals, are Looked After Children or are from Armed Forces families.

Children in receipt of Pupil Premium funding can, but may not follow the steps set out in the Graduated Approach. St Matthew's Primary School recognises that many of the children entitled to the Pupil Premium grant may not have benefitted from the life experiences that children of a similar age may have learnt from due to their life or family circumstances. Consequently, it may be due to reduced learning opportunities and not due to having a Special Educational Need or Disability that these children experience delayed learning or that their attainment or progress is hindered.

The attainment and progress of children entitled to Pupil Premium funding will be rigorously considered in line with the school's monitoring and assessment cycle and carefully evaluated by teachers and the Leadership Team. If children in receipt of the Pupil Premium Grant continue to make unsatisfactory progress despite high quality intervention, the decision as to whether they may in fact be in need of 'additional SEN support' will be made on a child-by-child basis should it be appropriate. Parents should be informed of their child's progress at each stage of this additional educational provision.

Admissions

The School Admissions Code of Practice (2012) requires children and young people with SEN to be treated fairly.

Admissions authorities must:

- consider applications from parents of children who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria as part of normal admissions procedures
- not refuse to admit a child who has SEND but does not have an EHC plan because they do not feel able to cater for those need
- not refuse to admit a child on the grounds that they do not have an EHC plan

The Equality Act (2010) prohibits schools from discriminating against disabled children and young people in respect of admissions for a reason related to their disability. Schools must make reasonable adjustments to procedures, criteria and practices for pupils with disabilities and make reasonable adjustments by making physical alterations. Schools must also publish accessibility plans setting out how they plan to increase access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and to information.

Any request for a place at St Matthew's Primary School will be considered fairly and without prejudice, irrespective of a child's SEN or disability. Upon a successful application for a place at St Matthew's Primary School, all children will be supported in a transition into school as is appropriate to their needs. This may comprise of a home visit, a 'Stay and Play' session in their new class or a phased integration into school over an agreed period of time.

Partnership with Parents/Carers

At St Matthew's Primary School we pride ourselves on our positive and secure relationships we have with the children and their families, recognising that parents/carers have a significant role to play in the successful education on their children. To develop our relationships with parents we operate an 'open door' policy, where parents are encouraged to make regular day-to-day contact with staff. Termly 'Parent Consultation' meetings also give parents an opportunity to view work, discuss progress and agree targets.

Parents of children with SEN are invited into school to discuss concerns with class teachers, support staff and members of the Inclusion Team and are encouraged to share information regarding their child's needs, any relevant information from other agencies or any advice from expert support groups. Throughout the school year the school may also host various Coffee Mornings, Workshops and Support Groups which parents of children with SEND are invited to attend.

Partnership with Specialist Services and Professionals

As a school, we aim to work closely with colleagues in the fields of education, health and social care to best meet the wide and varied needs of those children with SEND. Liaison with outside agency professionals is vital; we work closely with professionals from the Local Authority and the NHS.

Should we require the input of Specialist Services or multi-agency professionals in meeting the needs of any one child with SEND at St Matthew's Primary School, we endeavour to share the advice or recommendations with parents at all stages of their input or work with the child. On occasions where parental permission is required prior to the support of Specialist Services or outside agency professionals, this will always be sought.

SEND Complaints Procedure

At St Matthew's Primary School we aim to work in partnership with parents and carers to support children with Special Educational Needs. Concerns about the provision or support provided for pupils with SEND should be raised with

- Class Teacher
- SENDCo (Mr John Harper)
- Assistant Head for Inclusion (Mrs Natalie Crawford)

If concerns have not been resolved through discussions with staff members then the general complaints procedure should be followed.

There are some circumstances, usually for a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), where parents have a statutory right to appeal against a Local Authority decision. Complaints that fall within this category cannot be investigated by the school.



Rationale for Complex Needs Classes

The three complex needs classes at St Matthew's—The Meadow, The Bridge, and The Grove—are specialist Wave 3 provisions designed to support pupils with significant needs, particularly in the areas of learning, autism spectrum conditions, and communication. These classes cater for children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), are undergoing an EHCP Needs Assessment, or are supported by external agencies with an EHCP application in progress.

Not all pupils with an EHCP at St Matthew's will attend one of these classes as the support and provision in place in their class already enables them to confidently access the curriculum alongside their peers.

Classes

- The Meadow supports children in Reception and Key Stage 1, offering a nurturing, play-based environment.
- The Grove caters for children in Years 3 and 4, offering a more formal environment with increasing academic focus, while continuing to rehearse and reinforce key skills, such as social skill, independence and communication.
- From September 2025, The Bridge will open. This is designed for Year 2 and Year 3 pupils, focusing on developing independence, concentration, and the ability to work at individual workstations. It serves as a transitional stage for those not yet ready for the more formal setting of The Grove.

Curriculum, Structure and Approach

Each class provides a highly structured and nurturing environment, with the key aim of increasing children's readiness for learning by:

- Increasing engagement
- Developing tolerance and skills in working alongside and with each other
- Increasing both verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- Reducing anxiety
- Supporting and extending play skills

- Developing relationships and improving social skills
- Fostering attention in adult-directed tasks
- Promoting independence in a safe and enabling space

The classes are led by the Assistant Head for Inclusion and the SENDCo, with day-to-day teaching delivered by a skilled team experienced in working with children with additional or complex needs. The learning environments are intentionally structured to enable independence and include opportunities for child-initiated learning. Communication skills are fostered in a range of ways, including through Identiplay, Intensive Interaction, communication boards and Makaton.

Each class has its own curriculum tailored to the developmental stage of the pupils. Despite this, the core emphasis remains consistent: increasing engagement, developing communication and learning collaboratively. Pupils have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum. Elements of the curriculum are personalised to help children achieve their Tiny Step and EHCP targets. In The Bridge and The Grove, a significant part of the day is spent working as a whole group to foster independence as learners and to develop sustained attention beyond 1:1 support settings.

The curriculum includes:

- Daily Attention Autism/ Bucket Time sessions
- Core word curriculum
- Tiny Steps 1:1 work targeting individual next steps targets in the areas of Social and Emotional Development, Independence, Fine and Gross Motor Skills, Maths, Reading, Writing and Speech and Language
- Sensory activities
- Daily phonics sessions, which include Phase 1 activities where appropriate, focussing on developing auditory and visual skills alongside targeted teaching matched to each child's individual phonics phase.
- Small group teaching sessions based around the individual curriculum
- Planned opportunities for demonstrating and developing understanding through play
- Creative sessions (including Art, Music, DT, Dance)
- Expressive and Receptive language tasks
- Daily Sensory Circuits
- Gross/ Fine Motor skills programmes such as Write from the Start, Squiggle while you Wiggle and Dough Disco
- PE and gross motor skills development
- Social skills sessions

- Basic skills focus, particularly within The Bridge and The Grove
- Play-based opportunities to consolidate understanding

Our core focus is to enable children to demonstrate, rehearse and build upon their skills. Through frequent observation and assessment, staff gain a clear understanding of each child's current abilities, identify next steps, and plan provision to support continued progress. We prioritise readiness for learning by ensuring tasks are appropriately challenging and matched to each child's developmental stage. Pupils remain an integral part of their year group and the wider school community, joining their peers for playtimes, lunchtimes, and whole-school events where appropriate.

Placement decisions are made through collaborative discussions between school staff, parents, and external professionals. These conversations consider the child's strengths, targets, and readiness to join peers in their base class for specific aspects of the day. For instance, children in The Grove arrive and leave through their base class. The majority of the children only attend The Grove in the mornings and return to their base class in the afternoon.

Transitions are carefully managed. A child may move between classes (e.g. from The Bridge to The Grove) or reintegrate into mainstream provision based on readiness. These decisions are reviewed at least half-terminly by the Inclusion Team and in consultation with year group staff. Transition plans are personalised to ensure continued success.

The effectiveness of The Meadow, The Bridge, and The Grove is regularly monitored and evaluated by the Inclusion Team, in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team and the SEND Link Governor.