

ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy (“SEND”)

Ownership: Curriculum Committee

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Pupils in St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School are happy, confident and very proud of their school. They clearly understand their mission statement, ‘Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him.’ They can quote scripture to give examples of how they do their best to follow Jesus every day. Pupils explain that if they ever feel worried about something they are confident that adults will help them in a discreet and caring way. They are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the more vulnerable members of society and can reference Catholic social teaching when discussing their work with the local foodbank.

Catholic Schools Inspectorate October 2024

Pupils enjoy school. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils strive to do their best and achieve well. Pupils are extremely kind and caring. They frequently give up their free time to help each other. Lessons are free from disruption and lunchtimes are a buzz of happy and harmonious play.

Ofsted May 2024

Miss Carmela Puccio
Mrs Elizabeth King
Miss Rachel Brassington

Headteacher
Special Educational Needs Governor
Special Educational Needs Coordinator

1 POLICY AIMS

Our school sees that all children are beautiful, unique people made in God's image. This commitment to the individual needs of our children underpins this policy.

All the information in this Policy is based on the legislation which came into place in September 2014 with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice – the SEND CoP – and this policy is updated annually. The SEND CoP is based on other documents, referenced below.

This policy is to provide information about how our school supports all our children and those who may need more educational support. It outlines how provision is managed, organised and allocated, how children are identified, monitored and assessed, the wider responsibility of the governors and the importance of parental partnership.

1.1 WHAT ARE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES?

All children need support in school and learn in different ways. But to be classed as having 'Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities' – we use the acronym 'SEN' or 'SEND' – this must fulfil certain criteria and a process of assessment must take place.

The SEND code of Practice 0-25 (January 2015) states: *"A child or young person has SEND 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 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 facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post -16 institutions."*

SEND Code of Practice xiv page 15/16

But there are some causes of lower attainment or limited progress which are **not classed as SEN**. Reasonable adjustments should always be provided for physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a child's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Equality Act, 2010; SEND CoP, p.16). Other needs, such as attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, English as an Additional Language (EAL), receiving Pupil Premium Grant (PP) money, being a child of a serviceman/woman, or having a disability may not be classed as an SEN. Short term needs, like bereavement, are not Special Needs but there are many life events that can cause longer-term needs which require support.

A child with Special Educational Needs may not be a lower attainer or achiever – challenges to learning will be different for all children but it is hoped that they will be supported to help them achieve their academic potential.

Hertfordshire County Council outline clearly what provision is to be expected at different levels of need. This provision is available on the local offer website.

1.2 WHAT ARE THE SEND CATEGORIES AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

SEND CoP describe four broad areas of need which have been identified as the possible barriers to learning (p.97-98):

Communication and Interaction

Cognition and Learning

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Sensory and / or Physical disability

The following list is not exhaustive but to give some common examples under each heading.

1.2.1 Communication and Interaction

This heading could include Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

Speech needs could mean stuttering, stammering or articulation concerns. Many children start school with a few sounds still to develop but if this becomes a barrier to their educational process, they may need support.

Language needs may suggest a child that does not confidently have the words and vocabulary that other children their age do.

Communication may include those with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Disorder (ASD) and is about how children talk to others around them, including gesture and eye-contact.

1.2.2 Cognition and Learning

This category describes those for whom progress is slower than may be expected for a variety of reasons – perhaps working memory speed or a **Specific Learning Difficulty** (SpLD) like **Dyslexia** or **Dyscalculia**. There are also the terms **Moderate** and **Severe Learning Difficulties** (MLD, SLD).

1.2.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

Children who struggle with their SEMH may find it difficult to access their learnings, develop relationships and feel safe in school, depending on the severity of their need.

Social skills may be lacking or lagging and a child needs support with turn-taking in games, conversations and team activities.

Emotional health concerns might be the category of children that find it hard to self-regulate and manage their feelings. This could be due to being impulsive, feeling insecure or having low self-esteem or due to a historical trauma that has not resolved for them.

Mental Health is a growing area of understanding. All of us have good and bad mental health days, just as we do physical health, but for those who have ongoing worries and concerns they would be considered to have Mental Health as a barrier to learning.

1.2.4 Sensory and /or physical disability

Children with a sensory need may be associated with other needs, such as those with ASC. Sensory processing issues are not uncommon but are all very unique for each child. Other physical disabilities are often supported by Health professionals who provide the advice and support to make adjustments for those needs. This could be **Hearing Impairment (HI)** or **Visual Impairment (VI)**, or a **Physical or neurological impairment (PNI)** which would include chromosomal disorders or brain damage.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 PARENTS

It is central to all our children's success that a close working relationship between parents and the school exists. This is supported throughout the SEND CoP, where parent voice is at the heart of conversations, to hear the needs and wishes of the family. It is our endeavor to inform parents of how their child is supported and we welcome parent feedback and conversations about how they feel the provision is working, or not working.

We contact parents throughout the year, at parents' evenings, through letters, emails, parent courses and through informal and formal meetings. We encourage parents to take up these opportunities and regular contact with the SENCo is welcomed.

Parents are encouraged to access information more widely about SEND including through the Herts Local Offer website where parent groups and courses are publicised. Many of the courses offered locally are sent out by the SENCO to a parenting mailing list. This is open to all who are interested but anyone on the SEND register will be added to the list.

Our school is part of a network of schools in Stevenage called DSPL2 – Delivering Specialist Provision Locally area 2. The DSPL2 website also shares information about locally offered services and parents are invited to access this information themselves.

2.2 CLASS TEACHERS

Class teachers are responsible for teaching every child in their class including those with SEND.

“All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to: achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives; make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training” SEND Code of Practice 6.1 page 92

Teachers are expected to have an **awareness** of Special Needs (p.68,69 SEND Cop), especially those high incidence needs which are common in our setting. For children with higher needs, or frequently occurring needs, it would be expected that teachers would develop a more **enhanced** knowledge of needs. For example, in our setting, our Early Years Team are confident in assessing and planning for children with speech and language needs. They use the Wellcomm assessment to identify children's strengths and areas of need, they teach a programme to develop those who may have areas that need more practice. This is universal provision (which means all children access it).

Sometimes, teachers may have experience working with children and having training which is of a **specialist** level. They support and lead others within school.

The Senco regularly leads training to develop teachers' skills and awareness of ways to support children with educational needs. Money is allocated annually from the budget to support this as well as developing the teaching assistants who implement many of the interventions.

Our ethos of inclusion means that it is our aim for all children to access the broad, rich, deep curriculum through the class teaching of our team. This means that our focus on intervention is to enable access to the class and maintain their presence in the classroom through adaptations and differentiation, wherever possible. Some specialist teaching must happen away from the class group e.g. Braille learning or individual Speech Therapy.

2.3 SENCo

The **SENCo** in our school is **Miss Rachel Brassington** and is the teacher with responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Miss Brassington is completing her NPQ SENCO Award and holds a PGCE in Primary Education with QTS, and BSc in Psychology. Miss Brassington is always taking up training and finding suitable training for the other members of staff. Miss Brassington also looks for training and support opportunities for parents.

2.4 GOVERNORS

It is the **Governors** aim to ensure the needs of all pupils are prioritised so that each child is able to receive the full range of educational experiences we offer, implemented by the Headteacher and the SENCo. Governors Duties in Appendix A. Our **SEND Governor is Mrs Elizabeth King**, who oversees the work of the SENCo.

Through termly meetings with the SEND Governor and the SENCo, the Governors evaluate the provision within our school. Data is collated and shared and a SEND report is shared as part of the Head Teacher's report when communicating termly with the Governing body.

3 PROVISION AND PROCESSES

Monitoring and supporting children is managed through a 'graduated response'. The identification of any provision for children with SEND is a whole school responsibility.

Though the description of the schools processes focuses on the actions of the school staff, parents' comments, concerns and ideas are always welcomed. We recognise that parents are the primary educators and know their children best and it is our aim to work together to support the needs of all our children.

3.1 WAVE 1

The diagram below highlights the process, starting with '1' for 'Wave 1'.

Children all access the curriculum through what is called 'universal provision', sometimes called 'Wave 1'. This is the High Quality Teaching which is present in our classrooms and includes a range of differentiated strategies. High Quality Teaching is recognized by well-trained teachers with research-led teaching methods.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. (SEND Code of Practice 2015 page 99).



Figure 1: The Graduated approach to the Assess Plan Do Review Cycle. Universal, Targeted (2) and Specialist (3)

All children are assessed as a normal function of our school teaching and learning. Some of this is formally through the assessments, termly reviews (summative) and some daily in class discussions and marking (formative). Some of this is more informal such as through observations.

When a child is not making the expected progress, despite adaptations in the classroom, the teacher will consult with the **Special Educational Needs (and Disabilities) Co-ordinator (SENCo/SENDCo)**. This may be through termly **Pupil Progress meetings** or in a planned meeting between the professionals working with a pupil. Sometimes these conversations arise from parental concern.

All extra support is part of the '**Assess, Plan, Do, Review Cycle**'. In brief, this is that having seen a need, extra strategies are put in place and carried out for 6 weeks before being reviewed and next steps considered. If only one cycle is needed, then the child returns to receiving the '**universal provision**'. If this has not been successful, parents are informed and involvement with the SENCo begins formally.

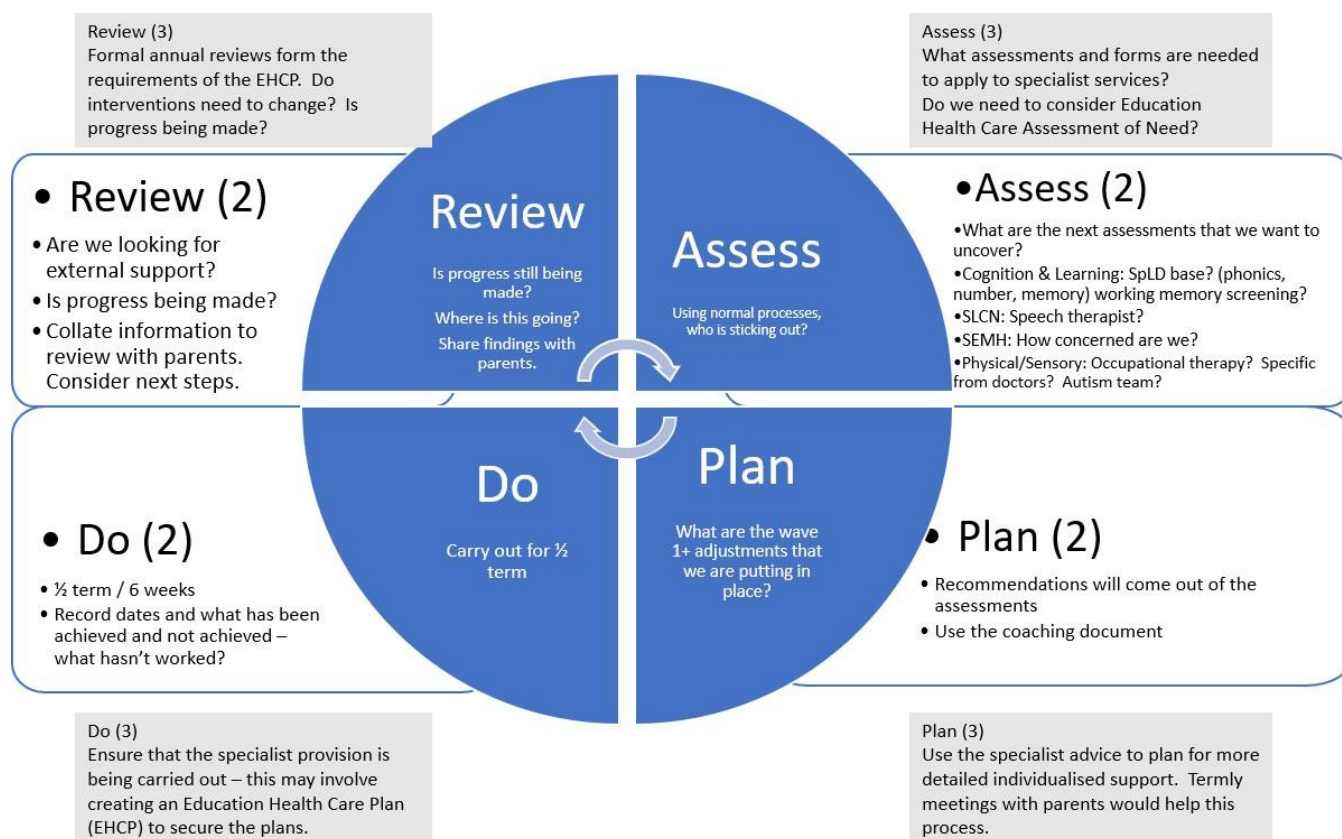
3.2 WAVE 2

Wave 2 describes '**targeted**' interventions, which teachers record on **Provision Maps**. Before an appropriate intervention can be put in place, initial assessments and observations are collected by the class teacher and SENCo. They discuss their findings and talk about what would be the best use of our resources – this could include time out of class for a planned intervention or TA support to pre-teach or consolidate what is going on. This next step is discussed with parents.

It will be recommended that a child with intensive targeted support will be added to the SEN register as confirmation of the support that they are accessing.

The SENCo will share their reports and recommendations and these can form the basis of the **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**. All the differentiated work that a child receives is recorded on a 'Provision Map' and a 'Pupil Passport' is created to share what has worked, what needs to be changed and how the child and parents feel about the support within school. **Pupil voice** is key to their progress and **Person-Centred Approaches** are used extensively within our setting.

When the Assess phase is complete, the Plan and Do stages take place. This is carried out for around 6 weeks. All records of the intervention will inform our next steps – has enough progress been made? Is the intervention now ready to become a permanent support tool? Do we need more support?



3.3 WAVE 3

At the review of the Wave 2 interventions, it may be decided that the progress being made is inadequate and we need to apply for more '**Specialist support**'. Several rounds of Wave 2 interventions must be tried before moving on to explore Wave 3.

To apply for Specialist Support, detailed records are collated to send to the advisory services to be directed to the correct team. More assessments may need to be carried out by the SENCo, or updates from other professionals may help inform the level of support needed next. Sometimes the assessment from the Specialist teams will state that the children are able to be managed through the school resources and will remain as Wave 2.

When there is a need for external professionals to be involved and extra provision to be organised, it would be recommended that an **Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)** will be considered. The EHCP brings together the recommendations for the provision and secures what is in place.

Individual programmes and adaptations are implemented to support children maintaining the progress in the areas highlighted in the reports from outside professionals. This is timetabled to cause the least amount of disruption to our children's learning and inclusion.

3.4 FUNDING

The school receives money to support children in school with additional needs. This money is used to resource the including to enabling us to employ additional adults who can be used to support our children. This money is not 'named' for each child.

Sometimes, a child may benefit from individual support delivered by an extra adult being available. For this, an application is made to 'top-up' the funding the school already receives. From September 2020, children who have an EHCP will have their funding reviewed as part of their annual review. The new process for funding will take the form of an online application where all professionals involved with the case decide the level of need. The category headings start from 'universal' through 'targeted' and up to 'specialist' support.

For those applying for an EHCP, funding may be considered through an Education and Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

For children who are not going to apply for an EHCP, the process of applying for '**Local Higher Needs Funding**' (LHNF) may be considered. Each of these funding processes may take more than a term to review as the process includes several layers of scrutiny through local and county-wide panels. LHNF is only for temporary funding and cannot be applied to if there is already an application to an EHCP taking place. LHNF is designed to help children have short, intensive work.

3.5 TRANSITION

All children benefit from smooth, thought-out and well-planned transition. This process starts early for children with additional needs. Teachers will liaise with the SENCo if individual meetings to support and highlight specific needs should take place.

Once classes have been assigned, information is shared around the best provision and support, and visits will take place. Children will have a chance to meet and build a relationship with their new teacher, and if a physical transition is not possible (such as Summer 2020) contact through phone calls and letters will be offered.

At the start of the school year, children who are in need of more transition support will be invited in to school to meet the teachers informally. They will access the school and parents are invited to stay and explore the classroom together, asking any questions and celebrating any progress.

Visual timetables are prepared for the children on their return, so that children can settle in more quickly to the routines and structures of the school day. Activities and groups are arranged prior to start so that the consistency of activities can be secured.

3.6 OTHER ROLES

These are the designated teachers for other roles within school are:

Children Looked After – Miss Brassington

Safeguarding – Miss Puccio

Pupil Premium – Miss Brassington

Children with Medical Needs – Miss Puccio

4 COMPLIANCE

4.1 POLICY COMPLIANCE

This policy has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (February 2013)

SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)

Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (2014)

The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document (Sept 2013)

Safeguarding Policies

Education Bill (2011)

Children's and Families Act (2014)

Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (April 2014)

School Accessibility Plan

Teachers Standards 2012

This Policy has been drafted by the school SENCo in consultation with the SEND Governor, the SLT and the teaching staff and is reviewed annually. Parental feedback is always welcome.

As well as using the legislation and our practice as a guide, pupil progress and attainment, data, changing practice and analysis of interventions in place.

4.2 RECORD KEEPING

Records are maintained by the SENCO. They stored securely in line with the schools Information Policy.

4.3 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Our admission arrangements are available to read through our Admission Policy.

4.4 PROCEDURE ON TRANSFER

If a child with SEND transfers to another school, complete records, including IEPs will be made available to the Headteacher and the SENCO of the new school. The SENCO will liaise with the new school to ensure the needs of the child are fully identifying and understood so the new school can arrange appropriate provision for a smooth transition.

If a child has arrived from another school, we make contact with the previous school to make sure that the best practice a child received previously is carried on when they arrive with us. We encourage parents to discuss their children with us too.

4.5 ACCESSIBILITY

The school building and grounds are specifically designed to aid access for children and adults with disabilities.

We are committed to removing barriers to learning to make the curriculum accessible to all. Please see our **Accessibility Plan** for more details. This is reviewed annually.

4.6 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Sometimes, parents may not be happy with an aspect of the provision which their child is accessing. A conversation with the class teacher is expected as the first step, and the SENCo may be consulted to attempt to resolve any issues. Then the Headteacher may become involved, inline with the Schools Complaints Procedure. This can be found on our website.

5 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

5.1 I'M WORRIED MY CHILD ISN'T MAKING SUFFICIENT PROGRESS, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you feel that you cannot wait until parents' evening to talk about your child's progress, start by talking to the class teacher. They will listen to your concerns and follow up at parents' evening when they have collated the evidence or book a meeting with you to discuss your concerns formally. This meeting may include the SENCo.

If your child is already on the SEN register and known to have support in school, arranging a meeting with the SENCo is also a great next step. The SENCo can be contacted directly or through the office. They will try to fit you in or book in a later time with the class teacher as well. Sometimes the Headteacher will be involved in the meeting too.

If your child has external support, it is important to maintain termly meetings to review and reflect on where progress is being made and highlight any areas of concern.

5.2 WHAT IS THE SEN REGISTER?

Children receiving additional support in school are recorded on the SEN or SEND register. This is just a way of recording who the school is supporting with additional provision. There are 3 classifications that are recorded on the SEN register – those who have had but no longer have additional support (N); those who are currently receiving additional support (K); and those who have an EHCP (E).

5.3 WHAT IF WE DON'T AGREE?

Hearing that your child may need extra support within school can be a very difficult conversation, and one that we don't begin lightly. We allow a period of observation where parents are informed what interventions are being put in place and what has been attempted before decisions are finalised. We want to work together with you to ensure your child's progress and hope that by having these conversations you will understand the procedures which we have followed to get to the point where we say your child has 'special needs'. If you do not agree, please come in and talk to us about what you think.

5.4 CAN WE, AS PARENTS, SAY 'NO' TO THE SEND LABEL?

Making the decision to say a child has 'Special Needs' is only taken when all the evidence is weighed up. Giving a child the SEND label brings in scrutiny and secures support for your child. This accountability is extremely important as it helps all our teachers know the best way to start to help your child without having a period of getting to know them. This is especially true if children move school. Although you may feel worried about the SEND label, there should be no negatives attached to agreeing your child has an educational need.

5.5 WHAT ARE 'CLASSROOM ADAPTATIONS'?

Teachers provide support in many ways to support children. Sometimes this can be a physical adaptation like where they sit and who they sit with, a slope for their desk or a fidget toy to use. Adaptations may include changes in the task, by cutting down the expectation, providing more structure or giving examples or giving more time. Sometimes an adaptation about the amount of adult support they might receive. The teacher makes decisions on what

they feel will be most successful for a child. When the classroom adaptations are not supporting progress, wave 2 (targeted support) may begin.

5.6 DOES GETTING A DIAGNOSIS OR BEING ON THE SEND REGISTER MEAN THAT WE HAVE TO CHANGE SCHOOL?

Children have different needs, and it is the needs of a child that makes the decision about whether they have 'Special Needs'. If your child is making progress in our school and the provision suits them, there is no need to consider a different type of educational provision. If you feel our school is not a good 'fit' for your child, you can consider a change in school.

If you have gone through a series of medical appointments to gain an Autism or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder diagnosis – or any specific need – you may want to visit schools which specialise in supporting these needs. You, as parents, have the right to choose.

5.7 WHAT IS A 'PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH'?

There is a movement in Health and Education where the opinions of those receiving the care or education are given the chance to influence the decisions around them and not be passive to what is happening. This approach is called 'person-centred' as it puts the person in the middle of all the conversations. We use many of the Helen Sanderson Associates materials to support our person-centred conversations, always talking about the needs and wants of the child.

5.8 CAN I GO DIRECTLY TO THE EXTERNAL PROFESSIONALS?

Many external services encourage you to come through school for support, but some can be accessed through Doctors or directly. If your child is pre-school age for example, you can apply for Speech therapy yourself without needing to go through school. Information about accessing services can be found through the Local Offer website, but please come to talk to us for more information.

There are also advice lines where you can access information straight from professionals. Most will give an idea of what can be expected within school and refer you to the SENCo. Please ask if you would like to call them and we can give you the details, or searching on the Local Offer Website will have information too.

5.9 CAN I APPLY FOR AN EHCP?

Miss Brassington is the best advisor for if your child needs an EHCP. The thresholds for gaining an EHCP has raised and it is advised that children who would be considering Specialist Provision would be more appropriate for the application, than those at a targeted level.

However, sometimes you may not agree. It is important to look at the Local Offer to the 'descriptors of need' and 'provision' to see if what you are requesting for your child or the level of need that they have would meet the criteria for an EHCP. It is also worth contacting SENDIASS – the Independent Advisory Service – funded by Hertfordshire County Council: info@hertssendiass.org.uk.

5.10 WHEN SHOULD WE CONSIDER SPECIALIST PROVISION?

Children who need Specialist Provision thrive when they access it early. If you are advised that your child is showing a high level of need, look early at Specialist schools as places in Hertfordshire

6 GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Attainment – levels the children achieve

Curriculum – the learning that has been devised by the government and schools must provide

Differentiation – the way that activities are changed to support every learner, which can be through activities, questioning, difficulty of task, how it was recorded e.g. digital recording not written, amount expected, amount of support etc.etc.

EHCP – Education Health and Care Plan – a legal document that brings together Education, Health and Care services to draw out the best way to help our children make progress. There is a time frame from the first entry of information about a child to finding out if the application is successful. If the application is successful, the next time frame secures when the final document must be created by and then when finalised it is reviewed annually. <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/Local-Offer/Education-Health-and-Care-Plans/Education-health-and-care-plans-EHCP.aspx>

EHNA – Education Health and Care Needs Assessment – This is a new aspect of the process still to be described and finalised by Herts County Council. It is expected that this will form a stage in the process for an EHCP which will include considering financial implications of the needs described. This will be confirmed in September 2020.

External Professional – People who work with us at school but are not members of our school staff e.g. Specialists from other schools, other provisions, or consultants.

HNF – High Needs Funding. The ‘pot of money’ that the school applies to support paying for extra resources for those children that need something above and beyond the ‘universal’ provision within school.

Inclusion – the world-wide aim to include all and give all children and families the right to access the school of their choice, regardless of the needs of the child or family.

IEP – Individual Education Plan – how a school records the individual support that a child receives.

Intervention – a programme of study or activity which has been put in place to target the need of a child. These are normally run on a one-to-one or small group and should be research based ie are used because we have seen a positive impact for our children on their educational progress

LA – Local Authority – for us this is Hertfordshire County Council

Looked After Child – CLA - or Previously Looked after Children – Children who have been in the care system and are or have been supported by the Social Care team.

Mainstream – the main educational provision that is offered across the country, ie those schools which are not ‘special’

Specific Learning Difficulty – SpLD – A learning difficulty like Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, and memory issues. See <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/services-for-children-and-young-people/specific-learning-difficulties.aspx>

Specialist – in this document, a specialist is a professional who has specific knowledge of an area of need which we go to for support e.g. the VI specialist is a teacher who works across Hertfordshire to support children with a Visual Impairment.

Special School – a school who provides education for those who require specific support and have complex need – severe Speech and Language need, challenging Social Emotional or Mental Health Needs etc.

Provision – what we are providing. Everything from the tools like slopes to lean on, adult support, time given for work or assessments.

Provision Map - A record that is made of support that is being given within our school.

Progress – term on term growth in attainment, which is appropriate to what is right for an individual. For a child who is achieving on track, we expect a level of progress per term in line with the expectations and levels which Hertfordshire LA define.

Pupil Premium Grant – additional money which the government allocates to those children who they term as being ‘disadvantaged’ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium/pupil-premium>

Pupil Progress Meetings – Teachers meet with Senior Leaders within school (including the Headteacher) to monitor the progress of children within school. Every child’s progress is scrutinised and next steps are planned.

SENCO – Special Educational Needs (and Disabilities) Co-ordinator – Teacher who is in charge of prioritising the needs of the children in our school who need additional support.

Targeted – children who need more than the differentiation which comes from universal provision.

Universal – the education that all children receive every day. Though this changes slightly from school to school, this is the education which is perceived to be the ‘normal’ provision before additional structures, routines and support might be added to support children.

Appendix 1

