

## **MAT Special Educational Needs Policy for St Michael's Catholic Academy**

### **COMPLIANCE**

This policy complies with the statutory requirement laid out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations (2014) and has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools, 2013
- Schools Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report Regulations (2014) (see [www.sendgateway.org.uk](http://www.sendgateway.org.uk))
- The Children and Families Act 2014
- The Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets) Regulations 2014
- Safeguarding and Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance, 2014
- Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions, 2014
- The Mental Capacity Act 2005

At a more local level and in order to secure consistency across the Multi Academy Trust, we have also referred to relevant documents on the Carmel Education Trust website, most notably the Anti – Harassment and Bullying Policy and the Safeguarding Children / Child Protection Policy. All other key documents will be set out in the Appendices at the end of this policy.

Our Acting Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is Mrs Lodge. She holds a B Ed (Hons) PGCE in Specific Learning Difficulties, an Advanced Diploma in SEN and has 30 years' experience as a teacher in the secondary sector, the last 20 of which involve direct work with students who have SEN.

You can contact Mrs Lodge via email using this address: [flodge@stmichaelsrcschool.org.uk](mailto:flodge@stmichaelsrcschool.org.uk). If you prefer to ring, then please contact us via main reception on 01642 870003. Mrs Lodge's advocate on the Senior Leadership Team is Miss Clare Mahoney, Vice Principal for Pastoral Care.

### **Academy Context and Mission Statement**

St Michael's Catholic Academy is a sponsored Academy and was formerly St Michael's RC Comprehensive School. It is a smaller than average secondary Academy with 23.2% of students eligible for free school meals.

**'Christ modelled to the world how to act justly, walk humbly, love tenderly.'** (Micah 6:8) so that we can have life in abundance and create a better future for all. These are the values that uphold our Catholic ethos: Promoting, Achieving, Showing, Creating and Being.

**At St Michael's:**

- **We put relationships first, seeking to properly know and develop each individual child**
- **We aim to teach in a way that helps children learn to love learning**
- **We teach the values of wisdom, service, truth, justice, peace, respect, generosity of spirit and looking out for others**
- **We pay close attention to individual needs, personalised planning and the essential contribution of parents and carers to help us educate the whole child**

Every child is valued and we work to ensure that every child is well cared for. We believe that all have an equal right to a full, rounded education which enables them to reach their full potential. We do the very best we can to secure special educational provision for those learners who require it. By this we mean provision that is 'additional to and different from' that provided within the differentiated curriculum to better respond to the four areas of need identified in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years. (Appendix 1) These areas are:

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

We agree that every teacher is a teacher of every child or young person, including those with SEN.

Our policy has been developed through a process of close consultation with our Head of School, Multi Academy Trust (MAT) SENCo and partner SENCos from across Carmel Education Trust, as well as our Senior Leadership Team. All parents are being offered the opportunity to send their feedback and suggestions to Mrs Lodge via the Academy's website. It has also been made available to staff, teaching and non-teaching, prior to being ratified by Governors.

This policy reflects the spirit of the SEND Code of Practice, 0-25 guidance

## **SECTION 2**

### **AIM (THE LONGER VIEW)**

Our school's approach to SEN is shared across the Multi Academy Trust. Our vision for children with SEN and disabilities (SEND) is the same as for all children and young people – that they have high aspirations, aware that they are known, valued members of their community. We believe that all children have an equal right to an education which enables them to fully develop their personal, social and intellectual potential. We focus clearly on outcomes for our children and young people. We want to support all of our children to live happy, fulfilled lives.

We see high quality provision as essentially involving the skilled matching of curriculum to individual need. We believe that channelling our energies into the collaborative planning, personalisation, delivery and review of targets, will bring high aspiration into reality.

**1.** To identify and provide for pupils who have special educational needs and additional needs. We will do this by:

- reviewing and developing our identification and provision in genuine partnership, as appropriate, with children, parents/carers, SLT, SEN governors, internal colleagues, LA SEND specialists, external agencies (including representatives from health and social care), key transition links, special school colleagues and the voluntary sector
- making changes to procedure as quickly as possible, to ensure that we are timely and accurate in our identification and as effective as possible in our provision
- deploying resources efficiently and identifying and meeting relevant training needs
- working with close reference to the SEND Code of Practice 2014
- developing systems of assessment, recording and reporting which are easily managed, accessible and clearly linked to the SEN policy
- providing individual strategies / targets, One Plans and EHC Plans which are consistently formulated, manageable and implemented as an integral part of short term planning and teaching.

**2.** To work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014

We will do this by:

- gaining good working knowledge of the guidance through close reading and attendance at training, as appropriate
- regularly reviewing our systems and practice in the light of the Code of Practice through internal meetings, via the mechanism of monthly Multi Academy Trust SENCo meetings, as well as via termly open discussion with and questioning by our governance, represented there by the Trust SENCo

**3. To operate a “whole pupil, whole school” approach to the management and provision of support for special educational needs**

We will do this by:

- continuing to develop strong pupil voice, including representation by children who have special educational needs, additional needs and / or a disability
- giving consideration to the role played by every adult in the Academy’s community and expecting them to at all times reflect the ethos of the Academy’s as outlined above, in the area of SEN and disabilities.
- understanding that in order to do this effectively, all staff, including support staff, would need to be routinely considered regarding training opportunities wherever this would further the successful inclusion of children who have additional needs, SEN or disabilities
- developing strong, effective communication systems that show crossover between pastoral and curricular leadership, with Acting SENCo part of Pastoral Learning Manager and Curriculum Lead meetings and having a strong voice via the Vice principal for Pastoral Care on the leadership team
- by strengthening the specialist expertise of staff in the area of SEN through enhanced training in the area of SEN and disabilities, including a strong focus on the new category of ‘Social, Emotional and Mental Health’ needs
- by consulting across the community of the Academy on the development of this policy
- by ensuring that outcomes include those focused on healthy, happy, independent living

**4. To provide a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who will work with the SEN Inclusion Policy**

We will do this by:

- ensuring that we appoint a qualified teacher to this post, who receives sufficient training to be able to well manage the day to day running of the SEN Policy
- creating sufficient non-contact time for the SENCo to be able to effectively fulfil their duties, especially in relation to teaching and learning, including social skills or life skills learning goals, annual reviews, IPs, One Plans and EHC Plans.
- providing clear structure for the management of specialist support and curriculum intervention strategies (eg timetables, working guidance for support staff).

**5. To provide support and advice for all staff working with pupils who have SEN or disabilities**

We will do this by:

- proactively creating internal face to face and online support networks for staff within Carmel Education Trust, so that all staff can be promptly signposted to sources of further expertise, as required
- developing a regularly updated and easily accessed bank of contact details for external support under the headings of Education, Health and Social Care
- providing dedicated time for SENCos across the Trust to meet with one another as well as with the Trust’s SENCo maintaining and developing close links with Local Authority SEN teams and accessing the training that that they offer

### SECTION 3: IDENTIFYING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We believe in the importance of early identification. This can avoid the development of a host of self-esteem, frustration in learning and behavioural difficulties and is recognised as an important area for regular investment in staff training. Attention is paid to the ability of staff to recognise a range of emerging needs, in line with the categories set out in the SEND Code of Practice, 2014.

The four broad categories of need set out in the Code are:

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

#### Principles of identification

We see these categories as a useful tool in helping us to develop appropriate action plans, in collaboration with the child / young person and their parents / carers and sometimes with the help of specialists in those areas, in order to improve learning outcomes. We recognise that putting children into any 'category' can potentially diminish the effectiveness of support. 'Labels' can become a self-fulfilling prophecy and contribute to a dismal, limiting experience for children and young people. We work to consciously counteract this possibility by viewing categorisation as a crude but helpful tool that is not allowed to become an end in itself. Accurate identification helps us to provide the most suitable provision for each learner. We seek to base provision on an understanding of each individual's strengths and needs, addressed through well-evidenced interventions targeted at areas of difficulty and using specialist equipment or software, where appropriate. Importantly, we recognise that all children within a category are individuals with essentially quite different personalities, needs and aspirations.

#### Strategic overview

Identification of SEN is built into our approach to monitoring the progress and development of all pupils. We take a systematic approach, which ensures that clear, agreed referral procedures are followed. This approach ensures that parents/carers are always actively listened to and involved if staff, or indeed the parents / carers themselves suspect that their child may have SEN. Our processes are detailed below under 'A Graduated Approach.'

Senior Leaders and SENCo also seek to identify patterns in the identification of SEN within cohorts and compare these with national data. This can greatly assist the development of whole school planning, especially where there are particular types of need identified within a cohort. It assists us with the development of high quality teaching by sharing best practice and highlights focus areas for staff training.

Various issues can impact on progress and attainment, whilst not in themselves constituting SEN. These areas include:

- Disability (whilst the Code of Practice outlines the 'reasonable adjustment' duty for all schools provided under current Disability Equality legislation, these alone do not constitute SEN)
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Health and Welfare
- EAL
- Being in receipt of Pupil Premium Grant
- Being a Looked After Child
- Being a child of Serviceman/woman

Children who are identified as being affected by issues in one or more of these areas will be closely monitored via the Academy's usual pastoral and data analysis mechanisms. Form Tutors work closely and systematically through reports to Pastoral Learning Managers who take appropriate action and involve parents / carers to help resolve any issues. Progress reports are shared with parents on a termly basis and where progress is flagged as a concern, staff with pastoral responsibilities and curriculum leaders work in close collaboration with parents / carers and any relevant specialist, such as our Parent Support and Attendance Lead or our Student Wellbeing Lead, to improve progress.

In line with the recommendations of the SEND Code of Practice, 2014, behavioural difficulties are not of themselves identified as a discrete category of need on our SEN Register. However, behavioural concerns will always be examined by experienced staff who know the child well, to determine the extent to which these may form an underlying response to social, mental health or emotional needs which can be swiftly addressed. This would normally require close collaboration with parents / carers. We may also take a multi-agency approach, if, for example, housing, family or other domestic circumstances are thought to be contributing to the presenting behaviours. Assessments may be used to determine whether there are any causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with communication or mental health issues. We also remain alert to the impact of bullying or bereavement, which can sometimes have a severe impact on well-being and sometimes (though certainly not always) lead to SEN, especially if unaddressed.

For problems of a 'one-off' or temporary nature, behavioural issues will not usually be referred to the SENCo. Instead, the Academy's usual systems of sanction and reward will be applied, as appropriate, in line with the [Academy's Student Rewards and Behaviour Policy](#) . Where problems with a child's behaviour persist, despite the provision of a burst of support, the question of whether or not the child may have SEN receives serious consideration.

#### **SECTION 4: A Graduated Approach to SEN Support**

PROCESS by which we identify and manage children and young people with SEN.

At St Michael's we identify the needs of pupils by taking a holistic view - considering the needs of the whole child, including their physical, social and emotional development. We are committed to doing everything we can to meet the SEN of our children and young people. Where concerns about an individual child's emerging needs are raised, whether by parent or by a member of staff, parents will be immediately consulted and an information gathering process will begin. This will lead to a focus on improving outcomes for the child in the shorter term. The child is identified as having 'emerging needs' and a period of more intensive support is initiated and documented by the Pastoral Learning Manager, informing the Acting SENCo that this is happening. The aim is to give the child a boost of temporary additional support which should enable them to become independent of this support as soon as possible. At this stage, there is no entry made on the formal SEN Register. This additional focus is often enough to ensure that the child's emerging needs are addressed and no further action is deemed necessary at review, which is held within a term.

#### **Children whose needs are already identified**

Strong transition procedures ensure that we are aware of children due to start their education with us who already have identified SEN. Where this is the case, close collaboration with the Primary SENCo / Year 6 teacher, (or with their previous school for mid-year transfers), ensures that an Individual Profile is drawn up well in advance of the child taking up their place. Children are almost always seen individually by SENCo and / or Pastoral Learning Manager for Year 7 before their transition. Parents are invited into the Academy within the first half of the Autumn Term, to meet with SENCo and contribute their own essential views to the Profile, which will be used to help all staff take the most effective personal approach as well as be best prepared in respect of lesson planning. This helps us to reassure the child, to know him/her more quickly and to begin to realise their potential from the earliest point possible. Some children with high levels of identified need receive enhanced levels of support for their transition. We will take advice from the feeder school with regard to the level of support that will be required and review this at the end of the child's first term, to ensure that the level of support being provided remains appropriate.

#### **Children never before identified as having SEN**

We offer high quality teaching in our classrooms. It is the responsibility of each subject teacher to provide teaching that is adapted to the individual needs of learners who have additional learning needs in their teaching groups so that those children are able to develop and make good progress. They may seek the advice of the SENCo to help them to deliver their teaching as effectively as possible and

support from teaching assistants (TAs) may also be accessed. Differentiation levels may be adjusted by way of a first response to pupils who may or may not have SEN. We believe that additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching and are aware of the considerable body of recent research by organisations such as MENCAP that proves this. However, if a child appears to be making inadequate progress, despite personalised, high quality teaching, the use of considered interventions and well planned differentiation, then the possibility that they may have SEN will be fully considered.

In deciding whether or not to make special educational provision, the teacher and SENCO consider all of the information gathered from within the school about the pupil's progress, alongside national data and expectations of progress. This includes high quality and accurate formative assessment, using effective tools and early assessment materials such as CATs results and baseline assessments at transition as well as screening of reading and spelling, plus ongoing assessments in those areas. Parents are contacted, usually by the SENCo, and a meeting will be set up so that we can gather as much information from parents as possible. All of this will help us to determine the likelihood that SEN exist and helps us to plan towards the achievement of appropriate learning outcomes. If we believe that we may need to draw on more specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals, then we will first request written parental permission. The child is involved at every stage of proceedings, as without their engagement and involvement, our planning is less likely to be properly person-centred and so be less likely to succeed. We will not risk further problems with progress and self-esteem by putting support on hold until the information gathering is complete, but begin taking action as soon as possible.

We will decide, in agreement with parents, to place a pupil on the SEN register if they have already been receiving more focused support via our 'Targeted Support' list for up to two terms, with no or little evidence of good progress being made. Whilst other approaches could be tried, involving advice from external agencies, where appropriate, no child will be allowed to go beyond this time frame without being added to the SEN Register. Being listed on the Register means that we believe that the child is making less than expected progress given their age and individual circumstances. This is characterised by progress which:

- 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
- Widens the attainment gap

Entry onto the register will be at SEN Support. This cycle is repeated on an Assess, Plan, Do, Review model every term. Our SEN identification and assessment arrangements are published within our [SEN Information Report](#). This Report serves a double purpose in that it also contains our contribution to our Local Authority's Local Offer. Our SEN Report is comprehensively reviewed annually, with pressing updates made throughout the year, as appropriate. Please see this graphic document if you would like fuller detail about our support model; the Power Point format lends itself well to illustrating this process.

Finally, we recognise that for some children, SEN can become evident only as they develop. We continue to listen to children and their parents about concerns they may have, including within the upper age groups in the Academy, acting quickly to identify SEN using appropriate assessments, where these concerns persist despite early intervention input. An example might be the inability of a child with a history of vulnerable literacy skills to keep up with the literacy-heavy demands of the curriculum as they near the end of the Key Stage 3 or enter the Key Stage 4 phase of their studies. English staff have been trained to be alert to these issues and referral to the College's specialist assessor for detailed assessment takes place via SENCo to establish the level of need. This leads to the provision of a shared support plan. It is usually sufficient to address this type of later developing difficulty via the College's Access Arrangements systems, with formal addition to the SEN Register rarely necessary.

## **SECTION 4: MANAGING PUPILS' NEEDS ON THE SEN REGISTER**

### **PROCESS – The Graduated Approach**

Parents and carers, as well as the child / young person him/herself, are involved at every stage of the assess, plan, do review cycle and their wishes, views and feelings are always taken into account. This

applies to all SEN provision made by the Academy, whatever level of support is identified as necessary to support all round progress.

In response to the new Code of Practice, we have taken a 2 step approach to additional needs that are managed across the Academy *before* the point of entry onto the SEN Register. Our process of graduated support begins with 'Emerging Needs' then moves through 'Targeted Support.'

Increasing complexity of need will demand 'SEN Support,' as outlined below. Where significant, persisting and complex needs do not respond well to evaluated, adapted support at this level, then an extensive assessment of the child's SEN will be sought from the Local Authority (LA). This takes place in close consultation with the child / young person and in partnership with their parents / carers, as well as with any relevant external agencies. LA SEN Officers assist with this process, along with Parent Partnership Officers provided by them. Where the LA decides that a full assessment is necessary, this may result in the establishment of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan.)

### **Identification of Level of Need**

Experience teaches us that most children with additional needs will present with needs best managed under one of the following descriptions of levels of need:

1. temporary and likely to respond well to a short burst of more focused support via the '**Emerging Needs**' approach
2. more persistent but likely to respond well to consistent approaches and personalisation of the curriculum as recommended via a Learner Profile, collaboratively drawn up with the child / young person, parents / carers, the SENCo and other key pastoral staff (please see below for further details of the Learner Profile.) This level of support is known as '**Targeted Support.**' The Learner Profile may feature some advice from external agencies, especially where these agencies have recommended specific strategies known to be effective within their area of expertise, to help the child/young person to make progress in academic and / or personal development terms.
3. more complex and substantial needs, where effective management relies on not only specialist educational expertise but also regular input from either health care professionals, social care or both. Here the level of provision is described as **SEN Support**. Children at this level may have had an assessment of their needs carried out by the LA, but it has been decided that their needs can be met from within usual delegated funds, occasionally supplemented by the LA.
4. significant and complex needs, where a **Statement of SEN** or an **Education, Health and Care Plan** may be necessary. EHC Plans are gradually replacing Statements issued before the publication of the new Code of Practice. The need for these is determined via a full assessment in accordance with the new Code, where appropriate. A child may arrive at St Michael's with an EHC Plan already in place, in which case we act at transition points to be well prepared to deliver the provision set out to help them to achieve individual learning outcomes. EHC Plans exist for the minority of children whose needs are significant and complex; adequate levels of progress can only be made if significant levels of provision are put in place that meet local criteria and goes beyond what is normally available within the Academy

### **Planning and Provision by Level of Need**

#### **Emerging Needs**

These can be picked up at any time via, for example, the child him/herself, parent / carer or via a key member of pastoral staff (usually the Form Tutor, as they often know the child best.) A note will be made of any concerns and a brief plan drawn up in collaboration with the child / young person and parents/carers, involving an external agency as appropriate, to try to ensure that concerns are addressed and allayed as soon as possible. The agreed strategies will be shared with relevant staff and a review date set within the period of no longer than ½ a term from the date the concern was identified.

#### **Targeted Support**

Unless a pupil arrives part way through an academic year, we normally prepare for their provision at all levels from Targeted Support onwards towards the end of the summer term, so that staff have useful plans in place to support progress from as early as possible in the new academic year. These plans will be firmed up with analysis of assessments, pupil and parent / carer views as early as possible in the autumn term. This allows for:

- conducting, marking and analysis of any helpful baseline assessments

- a 'getting to know you' settling in phase for pupil and teacher alike
- the setting up of information exchange and planning meetings with the child / young person and their parents/carers

Our planning at this level of support is gradually pulled together within the document known as a Learner Profile.

### **Learner Profile**

This document is co-produced alongside the child/young person and their parents/carers, with an active listening approach taken at all times by the SENCo leading the process. Our aim is that the agreed Profile will speed up the 'getting to know you process' across a child's subject and key pastoral staff. This helps us to provide for their needs as soon as possible and can help prevent any misunderstanding. A picture of the child's strengths, interests, views, areas of difficulty and aspirations is captured, alongside those of their parents / carers. Together, we list personalised strategies thought likely to prove most effective. We incorporate strategies recommended by external agencies working with the child /young person, as appropriate. This may include advice from Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists or Educational Psychologists, to name but a few.

Student voice is very important here, especially with regard to personal preference for approaches that have been successful in the past. The document includes reference to any access arrangements that may be needed to ensure fair and equal access to assessment. It is shared among all those involved in supporting the child / young person. We are currently introducing the systematic copying of this document to parents /carers. For children new to school in Year 7 in September, we aim to have these documents shared with all parents/carers no later than the October half term.

### **SEN Support**

This will usually follow exactly the same process as that for Targeted Support. The key difference is that the document used to capture the child / young person's progress towards agreed learning outcomes will be a little more detailed in terms of references to agreed short term targets and will be known as a One Plan. As with the other graduated levels of support, documentation will be treated as a living record, not an end in itself. Documents clearly set out identified needs, give advice about best how to remove key barriers to learning based on what works for the individual or at least what has worked before for others with similar needs at the same stage of development. They also set out clear outcomes to be achieved with the agreed support.

Responsibility lines are drawn, including reference to how plans will be reviewed and by whom. The input of the Form Tutor and relevant subject teachers is expected at all levels of provision review. All involved in the collaborative development and review of both Learner Profiles and One Plans will be expected to write directly onto the documentation, wherever possible, to show progress made and include any amendments needed to strengthen or modify approaches being taken in the light of experience. An increasingly 'common language' will also be helpful to those regularly accessing such documents. Our emphasis is always about building on what works.

### **Review**

We operate a termly cycle of assessing, planning, delivering and reviewing the recorded provision. Learner Profiles include relevant learning outcomes which need to be reviewed to check that the strategies agreed are proving effective. Evaluation of progress informs adaptation of current provision, as appropriate. Provision Maps for students who have the most complex levels of need are reviewed on a termly basis, as are One Plans. One Plans are currently in place for just the small number of children in St Michael's who have the very highest levels of need. This is a document produced by the LA, as appropriate to need. One Plans are kept up to date and reviewed with child/ young person and their parents/carers, by the Acting SENCo. Some TAs and the second teacher attached to the SEN department are currently being trained to assist with this process by September 2015. At St Michael's, the review feeds into pupil progress meetings by being highlighted within the usual cycle of academic reviews three times a year. This process involves the Multi Academy Trust Data Manager, who identifies discrete groups of students who have SEND and whose reports enable Acting SENCo to spot any areas of concern for prompt action to support progress.

### **Statements and Education, Health and Care Plans**

We would normally try different approaches to fully meet the needs of a pupil through our own provision arrangements at the level of SEN Support (see above) over the course of 2 terms and 2 reviews, before reaching a joint decision that we are unable to fully meet the needs of a pupil through these arrangements alone. This would trigger a move towards requesting a full LA assessment, which may or may not result in the issuing of an EHC Plan. This decision represents a move to the next level of the graduated approach. We compare our evidence for doing this with criteria set out by our LA, as well as by taking on board the specific feedback from all involved.

If we believe and agree that additional support, for example, by engaging specialist services, could be helpful to the child's progress, we seek parental agreement via standard consent forms, with this process coordinated by SENCo. Where there is a cost to further provision options, this is considered by the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team alongside Acting SENCo and any additional costs recorded in the student's individual SEN folder. Advice may be taken at this point from specialist SEN staff at the LA as well as from specialists such as our Business Manager within the Multi Academy Trust or from Health or Social Care staff, as appropriate. Information about costs is discussed with parents/families/children and young people wherever this is helpful in securing the level of support agreed to be necessary. We seek to find the most cost effective solutions possible, without compromising the quality of support offered. This is sometimes achieved through shared cost agreements across schools within the Multi Academy Trust.

If we identify that additional funding and support are needed, our SENCo, in collaboration with senior leaders, costs this out as accurately as possible, before approaching the LA using standard templates. We take advice from SEN Officers at the LA and can sometimes find further advice from SENCos or members of senior leadership teams across the Multi Academy Trust, the diocesan Catholic Partnership or other local area schools. We also have access to a helpful guide produced by the LA which provides some information on this subject.

The type of documentation completed depends entirely on the individual circumstances of the child / young person, but in every case pupils and their parents / carers are kept informed, their agreement sought and their views are regularly taken on board through whichever channels of communication were identified early on as being the most effective for that family.

We do our very best to plan, deliver, review and record at all times in accordance with the guidance set out in Chapter 9 of the Code of Practice. At least once a year (more if required), our SENCo collates an Education Report by requesting an indication of the child/ young person's progress against the objectives set out in their statement / Education, Health and Care Plan from all involved pastoral and subject staff. This information is collated into an overall report and sent out to parents / carers and others invited to review 2 weeks in advance of the review itself.

In terms of direct support from a Teaching Assistant, where this is appropriate to need, the level of provision hours agreed varies according to individual need. 'Learning outcomes' describes what we all agree to be the desired results of our joint efforts on behalf of the child / young person. Our provision will always focus on what works in terms of moving a child towards their individual learning outcomes.

Please note that EHC Plans will gradually replace all current Statements of SEN by April 2018, with families fully involved and supported throughout this transitional phase. Further details of our provision can be found under the 4 different categories of need within our Contribution to the Local Offer. [LINK](#) to SEN Information Report

## **SECTION 5: CRITERIA FOR EXITING THE SEN REGISTER/RECORD**

In line with the new Code of Practice, all pupils listed on the SEN Register are reviewed on at least a termly basis, with the pupil and their family closely involved in this process. Wherever possible, reviews are linked into review mechanisms that apply to all pupils, not just those who have SEN. For example, the first review of the academic year would normally take place during a routine Parents' Consultation Evening.

SENcos and all other staff involved in reviewing the progress made by pupils who have SEND, are reminded during SEN related professional development, of the importance of cultivating and celebrating growth in independent learning skills. We recognise that, for a small number of children, it will always be necessary to have their needs met via the provision of additional resources. For others, however, removal from the SEN Register (or removal of a statement / EHC Plan) is entirely possible within their school career. This marks both the child's own efforts and the effectiveness of the SEN provision that has been made over time. Where it is felt, having carefully considered the available evidence, that progress made is to the extent that the pupil can now safely have their needs met by the high quality

teaching normally provided in the classroom, the decision to remove the child's name from the SEN Register will be raised with the child and their parents/carers. This decision will be based on improvement that has been seen to be sustained over the period of at least a term. Where the pupil and their parents/carers are satisfied that it would positively benefit the child's confidence to now have their name removed from the SEN Register, this will be done immediately and a letter of congratulations will be sent to the child via their parents/carers in recognition of this excellent progress

## **SECTION 6: SUPPORTING PUPILS AND FAMILIES**

All schools within Carmel Education Trust work to provide clear, accurate information about a child's SEN and the purposes of any assessment or intervention that has been agreed with parents. We identify how parents can support progress towards targets at home. This includes progress linked to Learner Profiles developed for pupils receiving Targeted Support, as well as progress linked to a One Plan, a Statement of SEN or to an EHC Plan. On request, we will put parents in touch with local support or advocacy services for children, where they may find this helpful.

Parents and pupils will find a comprehensive, accessible guide to the provision available with this Local Authority and how it can be accessed via the following [link](#) . Here we find in one place the provision expected to be available across education, health and social care for children and young people in our area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. To view our Academy's specific contribution to this Local Offer, please visit [SEN Information Report](#). This contribution is developed under our statutory requirement to provide such a report (Appendix 4)

Please find set out in the Appendices (Appendix 5), links with other key agencies who regularly work in partnership with us to support families and pupils. Remember that in many cases, your own family GP can be a great help, including providing support with the identification and treatment of mental health difficulties.

### **Admission Arrangements**

Our admission arrangements clearly state that children who have a statement of Special Educational Need which names our school will be admitted. This wording will be revised at next review to reflect the transfer of statements to EHC Plans, which will be treated in exactly the same way as statements. This policy can be found at [Admissions Policy](#).

### **Access Arrangements for Internal and External Assessments**

We have a system in school / college to ensure that those children who need additional support or different provision to enable them to access exams and other assessments are able to do so with confidence. To ensure that we identify children correctly, we have processes in place which include the following:

- Information gathered from pupils, parents and staff during the transition process
- Information sent into school by parents or external agencies (with parental permission) regarding any additional needs that arise after transition.
- Information emerging from routine observations and assessments administered by class teachers
- Analysis of group and individual screening results of literacy assessments administered by suitably qualified members of the SEN Team

Currently at St Michael's, the Acting SENCo, supported by the Multi Academy Trust SENCo, where appropriate, is responsible for identification and provision in the area of access arrangements. Provision is supported by a wide range of suitably qualified staff, especially at times of external examinations such as during the summer GCSE period. We follow a clearly identified process which involves a range of staff, including administrators, examinations officer, Support Staff and invigilators at various points in the academic year. Staff training is led by the Acting SENCo and/or our Examinations Officer, depending on the type of training required.

Pupils are prepared as well as possible for the access arrangements to which they are entitled. Relevant information regarding appropriate approaches to support fair access to assessments is shared with the pupil, with parents at bi-annual progress reviews and with relevant staff, so that this becomes the pupil's usual way of working in school. This helps to ensure that they are able to work using those arrangements in as natural and as efficient a way as possible. Our provision keeps in mind the importance of developing greater independence in this area over time and we invest in IT resources that research tells us are effective ways of helping to secure this.

### **All Transition to St Michael's**

We put a range of support in place to ensure that transitions go as smoothly as possible for this group of pupils. As we are aware that some children, particularly those who have needs on the Autistic Spectrum, those with mobility difficulties and those with a range of other 'low incidence' needs, require something above and beyond the usual high quality support that we offer all pupils at transition. This means that, where there is significant need, we may offer additional visits at different points in the school day to help the child become more familiar with their new environment and with key support staff before they come to us. We also offer enhanced written and pictorial support, where this will help to lessen anxiety for an individual pupil. We are currently preparing a visually enhanced Transition Booklet to help to lessen the anxiety of pupils coming to us in Year 7 who have significant levels of cognitive impairment, needs on the autistic spectrum or unusually high levels of anxiety. In some instances, a child's medical needs dictate that time is allocated to drawing up an Individual Healthcare Plan (IHCP) with the pupil and his/her parents. We will take advice as necessary from relevant health professionals and provide staff with training to ensure the safety of all children in our care. Please see Carmel Education Trust's Policy on 'Supporting Children who have Medical Conditions in School' for more detail. (Appendix 7)

### **SECTION 7: SUPPORTING PUPILS AT SCHOOL WITH MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

The school recognises that pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education. Some children with medical conditions may be disabled and where this is the case the school will comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Some may also have special educational needs (SEN) and may have a statement, or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which brings together health and social care needs, as well as their special educational provision and the SEND Code of Practice (2014) is followed.

We have a clear, regularly reviewed system in place within the Education Trust to support pupils with medical conditions. Pastoral staff, administrative staff, the Acting SENCo and trained first aiders including those trained to administer medication and the school nurse, work closely together to ensure that we are providing the best approaches that we can in this important area. Our cycle of continuing professional development takes this area into account to ensure that all relevant staff receive training in areas relevant to the medical needs of their current school/college population. We are vigilant about ensuring that sufficient numbers of staff are trained, relevant to size of school population. In addition, we ensure that we are compliant with national guidance regarding the administration of medicines. At least 2 staff are trained to administer medication in line with Administration of Medicines guidance. Where children need to access medication stored in the Academy, this will be managed by trained first aiders in the Medical Room, located close to Reception.

It is important to us that all children feel safe in school / college and that parents feel reassured that we will deal with any emergencies in a prompt, professional manner which preserves the privacy and dignity of the child. Details of national guidance in this area can be found at Appendix 8 and the link to Carmel Education Trust's Intimate Care Policy at Appendix 9. As part of our policy and procedure, we will give parents the opportunity to provide information regarding their child's health and medical condition(s). We believe that parents should be at the centre of developing their child's IHCP and therefore we look forward to working with you to ensure that a robust plan is developed. However, ultimately it is parents' responsibility to respond to correspondence and to provide up to date and accurate information.

## **SECTION 8: MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF SEND**

We regularly and carefully monitor and evaluate the quality of provision offered to all pupils. This is managed in a variety of ways, which include

- Termly review and data analysis via the Pupil Profile Sheet
- Subject led Parent Consultation Evenings, where Acting SENCo is available for discussion
- Close analysis of data pertaining to vulnerable groups of learners by Acting SENCo, including children with SEN and those with disabilities, tailoring teaching and learning in response to this analysis
- Regular meetings with parents and pupils, including reviews of statements and EHC Plans
- Consideration of parent and pupil views submitted to reviews of progress of children with SEN towards their specific learning outcomes
- Sampling of parent and pupil views, including via the Student Council
- Close monitoring through the Involvement of the Academy and Carmel Education Trust governors at termly meetings involving Head of Standards and SENCo for the Multi Academy Trust
- Feedback from other Student Voice mechanisms, e.g. where children act as student leaders for student voice, representing their own respective year groups.
- Analysis of student voice is regularly used to inform policies and practice around the school.

Evaluation and monitoring arrangements promote an active process of continual review and improvement of provision for all pupils. Please see the Review section of our SEN Information Report (Appendix 3) for further detail in this area.

## **SECTION 9: TRAINING AND RESOURCES**

SEN is funded within Stockton Local Authority through a delegated budget for pupils of secondary school age. Funding that comes into school for each pupil is added to from what is known as the 'notional' SEN budget for pupils who have additional needs that cannot be met within the scope of resources normally available. Based on recent research findings, we aim to design support around the principle of greatest effectiveness in meeting learning outcomes, as opposed to a provision-focused tally of support hours. If needs cannot be met through this mechanism, then additional funding is sought from the LA in close collaboration with the pupil, their parents and relevant external agencies.

Training needs of staff are identified by the SENCo, based on the review of provision and in the light of information coming in prior to key transition points. The LA SEN Team often have an input here. Training is often provided by tapping into expertise already within Carmel Education Trust or the Catholic Partnership. Regular Trust and Partnership SENCo and Teaching Assistant meetings identify and provide high quality training. Within the Trust, the Multi Academy Trust SENCo provides training for a wide range of identified needs. As all teachers are teachers of children with SEN, all staff are regularly involved in training and development in this area. This involves the skills and expertise of the school SENCo working with departments or with the whole staff, as appropriate.

All teachers and support staff undertake induction on taking up a post and this includes a meeting with the SENCO to explain the systems and structures in place around the school's SEND provision and practice and to discuss the needs of individual pupils. All Trust SENCOs regularly attend LA SENCO network meetings in order to keep up to date with local and national updates in SEND. We are members of NASEN and have used ideas from their publications to help us to interpret the new reforms and to update SEN related policies in the spirit of and with reference to the new Code of Practice. Our Acting SENCo collaborates with Specialist Leaders in Education to tap into the outstanding teaching and learning human resources of Carmel Education Trust and the Catholic Partnership. This helps us to maintain and improve standards within the area of SEN. We also access high quality training from Stockton Local Authority in such areas as the effective implementation of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice and the effective transition process from statements to Education, Health and Care Plans.

## **SECTION 10: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. SENCo**

The SENCo, as part of the middle management team, is able to represent the needs of children with SEND in decision making and strategic planning. Primary responsibilities include:

- Liaising with and advising colleagues

- Co-ordinating provision and managing support staff
- Maintaining the SEN Support Register and recording system in accordance with Carmel Education Trust and Stockton LA guidance
- Liaison with parents alongside the class teacher / pastoral staff, as appropriate
- Beginning to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and standards of achievement then setting targets for improvement
- Reviewing the academic and holistic progress of children identified as having SEN or disability
- Supporting the accurate identification and assessment of pupils' SEN in close collaboration with children and parents, including advising on effective resources to support these processes
- Building up a resource bank of practical strategies to support staff with their effective differentiation of approach and work for pupils. This includes advising on the effective use of human and other available resource, including ICT, to maximise pupil progress. One example is the purchase of a lap tops for a student who has a visual impairment and the provision of a netbook for a student has significant developmental coordination disorder.
- Working with pupils, parents, external agencies and support staff to ensure that any advice given to us by external professionals working with the pupil is put into practice, as appropriate, reinforced through consistency of approach
- Collaborating with curriculum leaders to maintain and develop agreed, effective systems for the school's identification, assessment and provision in the area of SEND
- Involvement in strategic planning for SEN provision by identifying future needs and contributing to the school's plan for the further development of inclusive practices which benefit the progress of all children, including those with SEND
- Attending termly meetings with governors with an interest in and responsibility for monitoring SEN and supporting the drafting of the SEND section of Governors reports, including helping to keep the school's SEN Information Report (and Contribution to the Local Offer) and this SEN Policy up to date
- Liaising with local schools to ensure the smooth transition of pupils with SEND. The academy's Transition Programme ensures that children with SEND are given enhanced transition opportunities at the end of KS2, where this would be of benefit to the children involved. It involves children, parents and colleagues in those schools and sometimes external agencies. It continues up to and occasionally beyond the point of transition.

### **Role of SEN Governors**

It is the responsibility of the designated Governor/s, supported by Head of School, to:

- Support the Acting SENCo in carrying out her remit to a high standard,
- Promote high expectations,
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, learning, attainment and progress,
- To ensure that SEN allocation in the budget enables, as far as possible, the SENCo to carry out the roles and objectives associated with the post and in doing so raise standards of provision
- Ensure commonality of practice in line with school policy

The Head of School and the designated Governor support the SENCo in monitoring the effectiveness of the procedures in place. The Head of School is also responsible for the management of Pupil Premium and LAC funding.

### **Role of Teaching Assistants**

Our team of 7 full time and 3 part-time Teaching Assistants (TAs) primarily support the work of the class teacher, operating under their direct supervision and guidance. The quality of their relationship with the individual child is the bedrock of much of their work to support progress, including progress in personal development. The TAs are managed directly by the Acting SENCo, who in turn is supported by Acting Vice Principal for Pastoral Care. Our TAs are trained to be sensitive to the need to nurture independent learning skills and allocation of their directed time and energies during lessons should reflect this.

Designated Teachers with specific Safeguarding responsibility.

In our academy safeguarding is the specific responsibility of Miss Clare Mahoney and in her absence, Miss Claire McCarthy.

### **Member of staff responsible for managing PPG/LAC funding**

This area of funding is currently managed by the Head of School.

### **Member of staff responsible for managing the schools responsibility for meeting the medical needs of pupils**

The Vice Principal for Pastoral Care manages our academy's responsibility in this area. She works as part of a closely knit team (see Medical Needs section above) and follows a systematic, agreed approach throughout the academic year.

### **SECTION 11: STORING AND MANAGING INFORMATION**

Documents are safely stored in locked areas and often within locked cabinets within those areas, depending on their level of sensitivity. This is in line with our academy's policy on information management, (which includes information on how long to store documents, when they should be destroyed, what should be kept, where, etc.) and our confidentiality policy. If documentation of a more sensitive nature is sent electronically, it is encrypted in the interests of confidentiality. The security of these systems is kept under review by Carmel Education Trust's IT Manager, supported by our in-house network manager and the Trust's IT Helpdesk.

### **SECTION 12: REVIEWING THE POLICY**

We intend to keep this policy under annual review. We intend to be proactive here, making the review as pupil, parent and staff friendly as possible, with all stakeholders invited and supported in their involvement, where appropriate. This will make this a more relevant policy and will help to keep it fresh, a helpful steer to the work we do in this area and as accessible as possible to all, including those who have SEND.

### **SECTION 13: ACCESSIBILITY**

#### **Statutory Responsibilities**

The Disability Discrimination Act, as amended by the SEN and Disability Act 2001, placed a duty on all schools and LAs to plan to increase over time the accessibility of schools for disabled pupils and to implement their plans. We produce our Accessibility plans under the leadership of the Head of School and work with the LA, as appropriate, to develop our work in this area.

It is part of the ethos of Carmel Education Trust schools to routinely identify and remove barriers to learning through all that we do, though we still occasionally find it helpful to apply a checklist or audit approach to be sure we are not becoming complacent in this area. Whenever significant decisions are being made or policies developed, we now routinely consider any access and equality implications. We aim to keep a note of any equality consideration made and report this back to our senior leadership team in end of week reports or reports to governors / directors, as appropriate. This helps us to demonstrate that the 'due regard' duty is being fulfilled.

We increase and promote access for disabled pupils to the school curriculum in a wide range of ways. The following gives a flavour of what we do, but is by no means exhaustive:

Access to teaching and learning is promoted by providing both curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. It is considered vitally important that all learners are able to participate in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities and school visits, including residential trips. We run and act on risk assessments to make all activities accessible, taking advice as appropriate from external professionals.

We have greatly improved access to the physical environment in recent years. We anticipate the needs of students and Academy visitors as best we can, by referencing our transition material and including consideration of access issues in regular meetings of the SEN Team. Access to education has been improved in a wide range of ways.

We improve the delivery of written information to disabled pupils by routinely flagging up reminders on SIMs about any helpful adaptations when written communications go out, such as invitations to review meetings or to Academic Mentoring Days etc. We aim to constantly develop the range and reach of adapted materials to support improving access over time. Recent examples include:

- Extensive use of technology to improve provision e.g. for those with visual or hearing impairments
- Availability of technology for those with difficulties with fine motor skills.
- Provision of respite area at social times e.g. for those with sensory issues
- Physical aids to help those with mobility issues
- Use of coloured overlays/paper for those students with SPLD

In ways such as this we aim to make all written information normally provided to pupils available to disabled pupils. Parents are routinely encouraged to contact academy if written material needs to be presented differently to improve access and we do whatever we can to make these alternative publications available promptly, using parents' preferred formats wherever possible

Parents and carers can contact key staff such as the Acting SENCo and/or Office Manager by dialling the main administration desk and asking to be put through to speak with the appropriate member of staff. We encourage this rather than have subject teachers contacted directly. The SENCo aims to deal with all enquiries via phone, email or face to face meeting within 48 hours of a query being raised, wherever practicable. We recognise that dealing with any issues or concerns quickly can greatly reduce the severity of any difficulties experienced or anticipated.

#### **SECTION 14 : DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS**

Please refer to our [Academy's Complaints Policy](#) for details of how to make a complaint. We do our best to work collaboratively with pupils and parents within an active listening culture. This keeps the need for complaint to a minimum, but we seek to learn from any justified negative feedback, using it to help us to refine and improve our practice.

#### **SECTION 15: BULLYING**

Our [Rewards and Behaviour Policy](#) sets out the steps that are taken to ensure and mitigate the risk of bullying of vulnerable learners.

In line with the Anti-Bullying Alliance's view, we define bullying as 'The repetitive hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.' We recognise that the bullying of children or young people who have SEND can be subtly different, in that the victim may have particular difficulties in one or any combination of the following areas:

- perceiving
- feeling
- articulating
- disclosing

Bullying of children with SEND can be exploitative of those features of the child's condition or 'difference,' targeting low social resilience linked to that difference, or in some cases, exploiting what can be markedly lower levels of emotional immaturity.

At St Michael's, we recognise the importance of being a 'telling school,' taking every report of bullying very seriously. We appreciate that best practice involves:

**Communication** about bullying being open, effective, structured and involving all parties as well as parents/carers. We recognise that by working to maintain open, authentic communication with learners who have SEND, we give our community the best possible chance of creating an empathetic culture of respect, in which bullying is not tolerated and where all learners can feel safe. Where children with SEND are questioned about bullying, we know the importance of using a range of techniques to ensure that the questions are properly understood and learner responses captured accurately.

**Anticipation** – for example discovering when, where and by whom bullying can take place via carefully structured interviews or questionnaires. Armed with this information, we can take steps to prevent it.

We support formal systems of inquiry. Prevention comes in a range of formats in St Michael's, such as via the development of active teacher and peer support, the building of social skills and resilience in Chill Club or short pupil monitoring discussions and a wealth of whole community drives to build ethos.

**Response** – we aim to make this both timely and clearly graduated.

Parents and pupils know, see and hear this message by the following means:

We safeguard the needs of pupils with SENs, promote independence and build resilience in their learning in a range of ways. These include:

- *respite club*
- *Good Shepherd Centre*
- *Social skills group work*
- *Spectrum – Bereavement/Loss intervention*

## **SECTION 16: APPENDICES**

1. Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 – 25 years, para 6.28 – 6.35 (DfE, July 2014)
2. [Stockton Local Authority's Local Offer](#)
3. Our school [SEN Information Report](#) (and Contribution to the Local Offer)
4. Regulation 51, Part 3, section 69(3)(a) of the Children and Families Act, 2014
5. Other key agencies who regularly work in partnership with us to support families and pupils:
  - CAMHS
  - CAF Team
  - Autistic Outreach Team
  - Speech and Language team
  - Occupational health
  - School nurse
6. St Michael's Catholic Academy Admissions Policy
7. ['Supporting Children in School with Medical Conditions'](#)
8. Accessibility Policy – see school website.