



## The St Marylebone CE Bridge School

*A Special Free School for pupils with Speech, Language and Communication Needs*

Herries Street, London W10 4LE

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### SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY POLICY

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In devising this Special Educational Needs and Disability policy, St Marylebone CE Bridge School (the School) has had regard to the following relevant guidance and legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014
- SEN Code of Practice (September 2015)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
- Personal Budgets Regulations 2014
- The SEN Information Report Regulations 2014
- Teachers' Standards (2012, 2021)
- The School's current SEND Information Report
- The School's Accessibility Policy & Plan

This policy is informed by the School's Church of England ethos, ensuring that high-quality provision is provided for all learners, taking into account their varying profiles and special educational needs.

## **Vision and Ethos Statement**

At The St Marylebone CE Bridge School, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all learners, including those with diverse learning profiles, can thrive. We believe in promoting emotional, physical and mental well-being through kindness, tolerance and understanding. Our ethos centres on supporting every child to achieve their full potential, celebrating their unique strengths and contributions.

## **Definition of special educational needs (SEN)**

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

## **Definition of disability (Equality Act 2010)**

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010: a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

These definitions are drawn from the *SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years* (2015) and the **Equality Act 2010**.

## **1. Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

The aims of our SEND Policy and practice in the School are:

- To ensure all learners access a broad, balanced curriculum that meets their individual needs, allowing them to thrive in a supportive environment.
- To foster a neuroaffirming environment where every student can achieve academic and personal growth, recognising and celebrating their unique contributions and strengths.
- To engage parents/carers as partners in the educational journey, providing support and resources that empower their involvement and enhance their child's learning experience.
- To work collaboratively with external agencies to provide comprehensive support tailored to each student's needs, ensuring a multi-faceted approach to learning and development.
- To equip staff with ongoing training and resources to effectively address the diverse learning needs of all pupils, promoting a culture of continuous professional development.
- To promote positive mental health and well-being, ensuring that every learner feels valued, respected, and supported in their emotional and social development.
- To prepare pupils for successful transitions into adulthood, focusing on employability, independence, and social integration, thereby equipping them with the skills needed to navigate future challenges and opportunities.

## **2. Partnership with Parents/Carers**

2.1 The School aims to work in partnership with parents/carers. We do so by:

- making parents/carers feel welcome
- giving parents/carers opportunities to play an active and valued role in their child's education
- encouraging parents/carers to inform the School of any difficulties they perceive their child may be having, or other needs the child may have which need addressing
- instilling confidence that the School will listen and act appropriately
- focusing on the child's strengths as well as areas of additional need
- allowing parents/carers opportunities to discuss ways in which they and the School can help their child
- aiming to work closely and effectively with all other agencies supporting pupils and their parents/carers
- agreeing targets for all pupils, and involving parents/carers in monitoring and reviewing progress against these targets
- keeping parents/carers informed and giving support during assessment and any related decision-making process
- making parents/carers aware of the local Independent Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice Support Services (SENDIASS)
- providing all information in an accessible way, including, where necessary, translated information for parents/carers with English as an Additional Language
- providing family learning opportunities and support involvement of pupils.

2.2 We recognise that all pupils have the right to be involved in making decisions and exercising choice. As part of the continuous assessment of pupil needs, pupils are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their perceptions of areas of difficulty and what support is available to them to address these difficulties in learning contexts. This information is then fed back to staff through team briefings and tailored training sessions.

2.3 Neuro affirming practice

The school appreciates the preferences, interaction styles and communication priorities of neurodivergent individuals, and places the same value on these as the preferences, interaction styles and communication priorities of neurotypical individuals. The school aims to provide pupils with the skills that they need to be able to communicate and navigate social interactions with confidence and in their preferred way, as well as understand and advocate for their own needs and preferences. We do so by:

- Using neuroaffirming language and asking individuals what terminology they prefer
- Focusing on a student's strengths rather than deficits
- Acknowledging and encouraging a student's preferences for learning, freetime and communication
- Celebrating neurodiversity and the different minds that make up society.

## **3. Responsibilities for SEND**

3.1 The Head of School and the Governing Body are responsible for the ongoing implementation of this SEND Policy. The Head of School is responsible for reporting regularly to the Governing Body on the ongoing effectiveness of this policy.

3.2 All pupils at the school have an Education, Health and Care Plan or are here on an assessment place and therefore all have pre-identified SEND. As such, all teachers are teachers of SEND. All staff receive additional training and have a responsibility for maximising achievement and opportunity for all our learners. Staff are aware of their responsibilities towards all learners and a positive, sensitive attitude is shown towards all pupils at all times. Class teachers are responsible for providing differentiated expectations for all pupils and good-quality personalised teaching. Teachers will be continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing each pupil's individualised needs in their subject.

### 3.3 Graduated approach (Assess–Plan–Do–Review)

Although all pupils have an EHCP, SMBS maintains a clear Assess–Plan–Do–Review cycle within quality-first teaching. Teachers remain responsible and accountable for day-to-day progress; they work closely with LSAs and therapists to adapt teaching, environment and resources. Whole-school assessment points, therapy outcomes and pupil progress meetings inform adjustments each term.

### 3.4 Roles

- Head of School – strategic oversight; reports to Governors on SEND effectiveness; chairs key reviews where required.
- SENDCO – day-to-day coordination; Annual Reviews; staff training; liaison with SaLT/OT/EP; quality assurance of provision.
- Therapy Team (SaLT/OT) – integrated therapy; joint planning; targeted groups; contribution to Annual Reviews.
- Teachers – quality-first teaching; differentiation; assess-plan-do-review; progress towards EHCP outcomes.
- LSAs – scaffold communication and learning; promote independence; implement strategies agreed with teachers and therapists.
- Governing Body (SEND/ Inclusion Link) – monitors statutory compliance and impact.

## 4. Head of School

4.1 The Head of School is responsible for coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating the progress of all pupils and for making strategic decisions that will maximise their opportunity to learn.

4.2 The Head of School will be actively involved in and informed of the progress of all learners and any issues with regard to the School's provision in this regard through:

- Analysis of the whole-school pupil progress tracking system
- pupil progress meetings with individual teachers/tutors
- discussions and regular meetings with pupils and parents/carers
- regular liaison with members of the therapy team
- analysis of therapy outcome data.

## 5. Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator

5.1 The School's Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENDCO) will oversee the day-to-day operation of this policy in the following ways:

- Maintenance of information relating to the specific needs of the pupils
- Liaising with and advising staff in relation to pupils' needs
- Overseeing the SEND records of all pupils
- Liaising with parents/carers, in conjunction with class teachers/tutors/Therapists
- Contributing to the in-service training of staff
- Implementing a programme of Annual Reviews for all pupils, carrying out referral procedures to the Local Authority to request multi-professional involvement
- Overseeing the smooth running of transition arrangements and transfer of information for pupils transitioning to and from the School
- Seeking out opportunities to raise the profile of need types, such as ASD, ADHD, and dyslexia, with all stakeholders
- Regularly evaluating the impact and effectiveness of all additional interventions for all learners
- Gathering information from class teachers/tutors and Speech and Therapists to review and revise EHCP and Annual Review outcomes
- Liaising sensitively with parents/carers and families of pupils regarding their progress
- Attending area SENDCO network meetings and training, as appropriate
- Liaising with the School's SEND and Inclusion Governor, keeping them informed of current issues regarding provision for learners (nationally, locally, and within school)
- Liaising closely with the School's onsite therapy team
- Liaising closely with a range of outside agencies to support our learners, including Educational Psychologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Westminster Special Schools Training and Outreach Service, Children and Young Peoples' Service, Local Health Trust(s), Education Welfare Service, Virtual School for Looked After Children, etc.

### 5.2 Collaborative Responsibility for Learner Outcomes

The SENDCO, along with the Head of School, SaLT, OT, and teaching staff, will secure, as a minimum, good provision and good outcomes for all learners by:

- Providing differentiated teaching and learning opportunities, ensuring there is adequate opportunity for all pupils to work on agreed targets.
- Ensuring effective deployment of resources, including LSA support, to maximise outcomes for all learners.
- Promoting awareness and understanding of speech, language, and communication needs and their possible presentation both within and outside the classroom.
- Using a highly visual approach.
- Where required, provide additional adult support in class to support communication, attention, listening, and social interaction skills throughout their day-to-day activities.
- Creating opportunities to practise and develop positive social relationships with peers in a structured and supported manner.
- Creating opportunities to experience success on a regular basis to support the development of their self-esteem and confidence.

- Allowing additional time to respond to questions and organise language and ideas.
- Using reduced language levels (less language and more simplified language).
- Establishing a clear behaviour policy that is easily understood by pupils and staff and which is applied consistently.
- Maintaining a strong focus on developing communication skills in all areas of the curriculum and school environment.
- Creating a positive, supportive, and caring environment where pupils can develop confidence in their communication and interaction skills.
- Employing a broad range of strategies to support and develop pupils' language and communication skills, particularly those that support pupils' understanding of language in class and promote their social and emotional development.
- Expecting all staff to be aware of and facilitate progress towards individualised communication targets and EHCP outcomes.

## **6. Complaints**

If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils at the School, these will be dealt with in the first instance by the Form Tutor, Subject Teacher, or Head of Key Stage. If the issue remains unresolved, it will then be addressed by the Head of School or another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

The governor with specific responsibility for SEND may be involved if necessary. For detailed procedures, please see the Complaints Procedure.

To ensure concerns are addressed promptly, parents/carers are encouraged to raise issues informally before escalating them through the formal complaints process. All complaints will be logged and reviewed regularly to identify any areas for improvement in SEND provision.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The effectiveness of our provision is monitored and evaluated through:

- Learning walks by the Senior Leadership Team, line managers and (where appropriate) members of the therapy, wellbeing and behaviour teams, with feedback to staff;
- Ongoing assessment of pupil progress;
- Monitoring of targeted interventions;
- Joint planning;
- Informal feedback from all staff;
- Pupil voice (interviews when setting/reviewing targets);
- Progress tracking using assessment data and whole-school processes;
- Attendance monitoring and liaison with the LA Attendance Team;

- Regular pupil progress meetings and reporting to parents/carers and governors.

All findings are reviewed regularly to identify strengths and areas for improvement in SEND provision. This feedback loop ensures our practice is continually refined to meet learners' needs effectively.

### 7.1 Staff training and development

SMBS ensures staff keep up to date with SEND practice through INSET, specialist input (e.g. SaLT/OT/EP), coaching and learning walks. Induction covers SMBS's SEND ethos, neuro-affirming practice and communication-first approaches (e.g. visuals, reduced language, Zones of Regulation, Energy Matching). The SENDCO participates in local networks and undertakes relevant training to sustain expertise.

### 7.2 Data protection & records

SMBS processes personal data in line with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. SEND records are accurate, relevant and kept only as long as necessary, stored securely, and shared lawfully.

## 8. The EHCP Annual Review Process

- Parents/carers will be invited to review their child's progress towards their EHCP outcomes. Parents/carers will receive key documents in advance of the Annual Review meeting. These documents include:
  - School Subject Report
  - Feedback from key staff members on progress towards the EHCP outcomes
  - SaLT Progress Report or full SaLT Assessment Report (in Years 7 and 10)
- Pupils will be invited to attend a portion of all meetings/reviews. Meetings will be run by the SENDCO and will be attended by the pupil's designated School SaLT.
- EHCP Annual Review meetings follow a cycle and run through the Autumn, Spring, and Summer terms depending on the pupil's Year Group and Local Authority.
- Meetings will last approximately 50 minutes.
- Pupils' views are gathered in advance of the meetings through a tailored Google Slides document, which enables pupils to reflect on their learning, their experiences over the year, relationships, strengths, areas of difficulties, and priorities for the future.
- Parents/carers are invited to provide their views by completing a proforma in advance of the meeting and then again through their participation in the meeting itself.
- Parents/carers and pupils will be consulted regarding who they would like to invite to the Annual Review (careful consideration is made to the number of adults in the room to ensure the pupil is not overwhelmed).
- Parents/carers will be given at least two weeks' notice of the date for their review. We will endeavour to rearrange the appointment if parents/carers are unable to attend; however, if this is not possible, information will be sent home in the post.
- Parents/carers are able to request a telephone/video meeting if they are unable to attend a meeting in school.
- The format of the meeting will follow a discussion of the following headings:
  - Like and Admire (strengths and achievements)
  - Important Now (academic progress, social-emotional development,

- independence, behaviour)
- Important In the Future (Post 16 and adulthood)
- How Best to Support (support being provided, advice, further support required)
- Working Well (progress, social-emotional development, independence, behaviour)
- Even Better If (progress, social-emotional development, independence, behaviour, and priorities for coming year)
- From Year 9 onwards, Annual Reviews include a clear focus on preparing for adulthood (employment, independent living, community inclusion and health). SMBS curriculum and careers pathways support these outcomes, with personalised guidance and provider encounters.

## 9. Core Provision

The staff at the School have high expectations and plan carefully to meet the learning needs of all our pupils. We give all pupils a wide range of opportunities to practise, reinforce, generalise, and apply their skills; show what they know, understand, and can do.

### 9.1 Communication and Interaction

Integrated speech and language therapy form the basis of our provision. This means:

- Regular training for school staff on a range of relevant communication topics and best practices.
- Joint planning sessions between teachers and the Speech and Language Therapist (SaLT) to ensure lessons are appropriately differentiated to meet pupils' individual communication needs.
- Comprehensive assessments of all pupils' communication needs upon entry and at key stage transitions, with detailed reports including specific recommendations provided.
- Contribution from the SaLT to each pupil's annual review.
- Weekly communication-focused sessions delivered by the SaLT to groups of pupils.
- Individual monitoring of communication progress, including recommendations for next steps.
- Parent workshops to engage families in supporting communication development at home.
- Shape coding is employed, although less emphasised, alongside Zones of Regulation and Power Up/Power Down energy levels to help students manage their emotional states effectively.
- Flexible seating options are available to support student comfort and engagement during lessons.

### 9.2 Cognition and Learning

- Small teaching groups for all subjects (6-14 pupils).
- High staff: pupil ratios to provide personalised support.
- Individual Chrome Books to support alternative means of recording learning.
- Highly differentiated learning using visual and multisensory approaches.
- High levels of structure within tasks and activities to support independent working and self-review.

- Pre-teaching and over-learning of key vocabulary.
- Frequent short learning/movement breaks.
- Reduced language load and differentiated curriculum based on individual subject outcomes.
- Comprehensive baselining on entry.
- Effective deployment of LSA support and timely intervention to help pupils through repetition, re-phrasing, and breaking down tasks.
- Qualified and trained staff committed to meeting the needs of all pupils, with regular training opportunities.
- Strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Targeted literacy and numeracy support, including a range of externally accredited qualifications.
- College links and vocational learning opportunities in Key Stage 4.
- A variety of enrichment opportunities to support pupil achievement, interests, and social and emotional development.

### 9.3 Behaviour, Social and Emotional

- Small tutor groups (max 8 pupils) led by a teacher.
- Zones of Regulation and Power Up/Power-down strategies are embedded across the school to help students understand and manage their emotions effectively.
- Mental Health curriculum from Year 7 through to Year 11 to support and develop pupils' awareness of mental health.
- Training for staff in the use of comic strips and social stories.
- Values-based reward system embedded across the School, supported by our Positive Behaviour Policy.
- Access to lunchtime and after-school clubs to support social interaction and choice-making.
- Close liaison with home through termly tutor phone calls, regular meetings between teachers and parents/carers, and a comprehensive Parent Workshop programme.

### 9.4 Physical and Sensory

- Integrated Occupational Therapy (OT) provision coordinated by on-site OT (2 days per week).
- Life skills development through qualifications and an Preparation for Adulthood curriculum.
- Weekly enrichment activities that change termly to provide opportunities for pupils to develop existing or new interests.
- Access to specialised equipment to support fine-motor skills (e.g., seat cushions and ear defenders).
- Sensory boxes/fidgets available in every classroom related to the Zones of Regulation to help support pupil concentration and self-regulation.
- Referral to OT if further support is needed.

### 9.5 Access to Full Life at the School

- A wide range of educational trips and visits are organised throughout the school year.
- All pupils are welcome to attend after-school clubs with parental consent.

- Encouragement for all pupils to participate in physical education and sport, with reasonable adjustments made for any additional requirements.
- Variety of Homework Learning tasks set termly and available through the School website, with in-school support available.

#### 9.6 Access to the Building

- Good access throughout the School with washroom facilities designed for all users.
- Design and construction of the School building to accommodate the needs of pupils, staff, and visitors with physical difficulties and other impairments.
- Ensured access to all learning spaces and outdoor areas, with appropriate lighting, acoustic treatment, and supportive colour schemes.

#### 9.7 Additional SEND Support

Additional SEND support can take many forms, including:

- Special learning programmes for pupils.
- Extra help from teachers or Learning Support Assistants.
- Adapting materials and equipment.
- Small group work.
- Observation of pupils in the class or at the break, with record-keeping.
- Assisting pupils to participate in class activities.
- Additional targeted or specialist intervention.

#### 9.8 Further External SEND Support

- Further external SEND support may include:
- Physiotherapy input.
- Occupational Therapy provision.
- Multi-Professional Team involvement, including Children's Services.
- SEND pathways service, including Careers.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).
- Children With Disabilities Team (CwDT).
- School Exclusion and Reintegration Officer.
- Training/workshops and individualised guidance.
- Advice from the teacher or SENDCO and support agencies.

#### 9.9 Supporting pupils with medical conditions

Pupils with medical conditions are supported to access full education, including trips and PE. Individual healthcare plans are developed with health professionals where appropriate; staff receive relevant training; arrangements for medicines follow school policy. See the Medical, Personal and Intimate Needs Policy for details.

### **10. Exam Access Arrangements**

The SENDCO will assess and evidence entitlement to special access arrangements for pupils taking exams. They will refer to external professionals when further assessments are required. See the Examinations Policy.

- Progress and attainment is monitored and reported on regularly through data drops, target-setting meetings, Annual Review meetings, and Parent Days
- Parents/carers are kept informed of the School's interventions on behalf of their children as appropriate.
- Pupils are made aware of the provision available to them.

### **11. Responsibilities within Our School**

Any queries relating to this policy should be directed to:

- Claire Brooks, Deputy Head of School
- Katy Hunter, SENDCO
- Kate Miller, Head of School

### **12. Key documentation**

- *Children and Families Act 2014*
- *SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015)*
- *Equality Act 2010*
- *Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014*
- *Special Educational Needs (Personal Budgets and Direct Payments) Regulations 2014*
- *SEN Information Report Regulations 2014*
- *Teachers' Standards (2012, updated 2021)*
- DfE: Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- SMBS: SEND Information Report; Accessibility Policy & Plan; Data Protection Policy; Records Retention Schedule; Medical, Personal and Intimate Needs Policy; inclusive behaviour support policy.