



SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL



LEARNING SUPPORT POLICY

Approved by:	Headmaster  Chair of Governors 	Date: 1 st October 2026
Last reviewed on:	1 st October 2024	
Next review by:	1 st October 2026	

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the School including EYFS

This policy:

- **Is non-contractual in nature;**
- **Applies to all members of staff except those who have not completed their probationary period;**
- **Can be adjusted by the School to suit specific circumstances;**
- **Can be varied unilaterally by the School.**

1. Aims and objectives

Our learning support policy aims to:

- Set out how our school will:
 - Support and make reasonable adjustments for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)
 - Provide pupils with SEND access to all aspects of school life so they can engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who do not have SEND
 - Help pupils with SEND fulfill their aspirations and achieve their best
 - Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
 - Help pupils with SEND make a successful transition into adulthood
 - Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents or carers and involve them in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Communicate with, and involve, pupils with SEND and their parents or carers in discussions and decisions about support and provision for the pupil
- Make sure the learning support policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff

2. Vision and values

At Saint Nicholas School, we are committed to providing individualised learning for **all** our pupils, including those within the EYFS. Our intention is to provide the appropriate support regardless of label or diagnosis to ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn and make progress.

At Saint Nicholas School we are committed to providing quality first teaching to all of our pupils. Quality first teaching is the concept that high-quality teaching is the first step to responding to pupils who have or may have special educational needs, additional interventions cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. High-quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will meet the individual needs of the majority of pupils.

The key characteristics of quality first teaching (as set out by the Department for Children, Schools and Families) are:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning
- High levels of interaction for all pupils
- Appropriate use of questioning, modelling and explaining on the part of the teacher
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk both individually and in groups
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils

At Saint Nicholas School we will provide all pupils with access to a rich, broad and balanced curriculum. We are committed to making sure all our pupils have the chance to thrive and supporting them to meet their full potential.

3. Legislation and guidance

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

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out the school's duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out the school's responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes having a disability) and those who don't share it

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

At our school we strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils, no matter their **needs and abilities**, a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfill their aspirations.

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to make sure that pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision to be made for them.

They have a **learning difficulty or disability** if they have:

- A significantly greater difficulty in learning than most others of the same age, or
- 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

5.2 Disability

Pupils are considered to have a **disability** if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.

The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5.3 The 4 areas of need

The needs of pupils with SEND are grouped into 4 broad areas. Pupils can have needs that cut across more than 1 area, and their needs may change over time.

Interventions may be selected that are appropriate for the pupil's particular area(s) of need, at the relevant time.

AREA OF NEED	
Communication and interaction	<p>Pupils with needs in this area have difficulty communicating with others. They may have difficulty understanding what is being said to them, have trouble expressing themselves, or do not understand or use the social rules of communication.</p> <p>Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.</p>
Cognition and learning	<p>Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia ● Moderate learning difficulties ● Severe learning difficulties ● Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment
Social, emotional and mental health	<p>These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder ● Attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder ● Suffered adverse childhood experiences <p>These needs can manifest in many ways, for example as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.</p>
Sensory and/or physical	<p>Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided.</p> <p>Pupils may have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment ● A physical impairment <p>These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.</p>

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Learning Support Department

Senior Leadership Team Roles:

Mrs L Thomas Deputy Head Pastoral, SENCo (National Award for SEN Co-ordination)

Mrs S Martin Assistant Head Pastoral – Lower School, Assistant SENCo (National Award for SEN Co-ordination)

Mrs J Ridley – Warren – Level 7 Assessor & Access Arrangements Coordinator

They will:

- Discuss with parents possible undiagnosed SEN and liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Where appropriate carry out screeners and share results with parents
- Work with the headmaster and the SEND Governor to determine the strategic development of the learning support policy and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEN
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEN receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEN support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be a point of contact for external agencies
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned
- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEN and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution in a timely manner
- Work with the headmaster and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headmaster, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the headmaster, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the learning support the school offers

The wider Learning Support Department:

Wellbeing	Lead LSA across school
EYFS	2 Learning Support Assistants
Lower school	2 Learning Support Assistant working across the Lower School
KS3	1 Learning Support Assistant (HLTA)
KS4	2 Learning Support Assistants (HLTA)

All of our LSAs work flexibly across the whole school, where a need is identified and to utilise their individual specialisms.

6.2 The SEND link governor

The SEND link governor is Tracy Haste

The SEND governor will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at governing board meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within the school and update the governing board on this
- Work with the headmaster and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school

6.3 The headmaster

The headmaster will:

- Work with the SENCo and SEND link governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCo and school governors to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND, and their progress
- Make sure that the SENCo has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- With the SENCo, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the SENCo, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the learning support the school offers or can access

6.5 Teachers

Each teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class

- Working closely with any learning support assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCo to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this policy
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
 - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
 - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
 - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
 - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

6.6 Parents or carers

Parents or carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress or development.

Parents or carers of a pupil on the SEND register will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about the pupil's SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. They will be:

- Invited to meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress

6.7 The pupil

Pupils will always be given the opportunity to provide information and express their views about their SEND and the support provided. They will be invited to participate in discussions and decisions about this support. This might involve the pupil:

- Explaining what their strengths and difficulties are
- Contributing to setting targets or outcomes
- Giving feedback on the effectiveness of interventions

The pupil's views will be taken into account in making decisions that affect them, whenever possible.

7. Our approach to SEND support

7.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

At Saint Nicholas school we place great emphasis on early identification and assessment for any pupil who may have special educational needs or disability. Identification may be through:

- teacher referral (SENCo Consultation Form)
- ongoing assessment and progress reports
- observation
- school based assessments and screenings to identify areas of need
- parental meetings
- pupil voice

Schools based assessments and screenings

Members of the learning support team may undertake individual assessments or screenings to help identify areas of needs and appropriate support for pupils. This takes place within the school's usual practice. In KS4 all pupils will complete an Exact assessment, to identify whether they qualify for Access Arrangements.

7.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

The school will put the pupil at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

When we are aiming to identify whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents. These conversations will make sure that:

- Everyone develops a good understanding of the pupil's areas of strength and difficulty
- We take into account any concerns the parents have
- Everyone understands the agreed outcomes sought for the child
- Everyone is clear on what the next steps are

We will formally notify parents if it is decided that a pupil will receive learning support provision.

7.3 The graduated approach to learning support

We will follow the graduated approach and the four-part cycle of assess, plan, do, review for children with additional needs and those with possible additional needs.

Teachers will work with the SENCo to carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This will draw on:

- The teacher's assessment and experience of the pupil
- Their previous progress and attainment and behaviour
- Other teachers' assessments, where relevant
- The individual's development in comparison to their peers and national data
- The views and experience of parents
- The pupil's own views
- Advice from external support services, if relevant

All teachers and support staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of their needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided, and any teaching strategies or approaches that are required. We will regularly review the effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress.

Pupils on the learning support register will have regular One Plan Review meetings to support the graduated approach. Individual targets will be recorded and evaluated taking into account the views of pupils, parents and school staff. The teacher and the SENCo will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

7.4 Levels of support

Tier 3	Tier 2	Tier 1
Quality First Teaching In class intervention (baseline and exit data reviewed)	One Page Profile – EYFS/KS1/KS2	One Planning – EYFS/KS1/KS2 One Page Profile – KS3/KS4 On learning support register

Reasonable adjustments SENCo Consultation	Higher level of intervention for a sustained period. Screeners/individual assessments Assessment in progress or likely to be needed	Diagnostic assessment complete with a diagnosis
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7.5 Learning support on offer

Learning support will be targeted at those pupils on the learning support register with a diagnosis, those going through the assessment process or to support early intervention.

Lower School (Reception to Year 5)

The majority of learning support will take place in the classroom, to support all pupils' access to QFT. There will be minimal withdrawn interventions with a focus on the early acquisition of Mathematics, English and developmental focused skills.

Upper School (Year 6 to 11)

The majority of learning support will take place in the classroom, to support all pupils' access to QFT, with a focus on Mathematics and English. There will be minimal withdrawn interventions with a focus on mathematics, English, study skills, organisation and revision techniques.

Learning support interventions are suspended during examinations due to the need to support and deliver access arrangements.

7.6 Access Arrangements

Access arrangements are considered on an individual basis and will consider the needs of the pupil and the methods of assessment for each subject's examination. There are two categories of access arrangement, firstly, centre-delegated which are put in place by the School and require no formal assessment or application to the JCQ and secondly, the arrangements which require approval and must be granted by the JCQ or awarding bodies. The aforementioned is coordinated by the SENCo who hold the appropriate qualification for assessing access arrangements. This table details the most commonly used arrangements in both categories:

Centre-delegated access arrangements	Arrangements requiring approval
Amplification equipment	Bilingual dictionary with 10% extra time
Bilingual dictionary	Computer reader/reader
Braille transcript	25% extra time
Brailers	Extra time over 25%
Closed Circuit Television (CCTV)	Practical Assistant
Colour naming by the invigilator for candidates who are colour blind	Scribe/speech recognition technology.
Coloured overlays	Listening to music/white noise
Communication Professional (for candidates using Sign Language)	
Examination on coloured/enlarged paper	
Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components	
Low vision aid/magnifier	
Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners	

Prompter	
Read aloud (which can include an examination reading pen)	
Alternative invigilation within the centre	
Supervised rest breaks	
*Word processor.	
Live speaker for pre-recorded examination components	
Low vision aid/magnifier	
Optical Character Reader (OCR) scanners	
Non-electronic headphones	
Timer on a candidate's desk – a small countdown clock, a small analogue or digital clock, digital timer	

Normal Way of Working

The centre based arrangement(s) put in place must reflect the support given to the candidate in the centre, this is commonly referred to as 'normal way of working'. For example:

- in the classroom (where appropriate)
- working in small groups for reading and/or writing
- literacy support lessons
- literacy intervention strategies
- in internal school tests/examinations
- mock examinations

*A word processor will not be granted to a candidate because he/she simply wants to type rather than write in examinations or can work faster on a keyboard, or because he/she uses a laptop at home. The use of a word processor must reflect the candidate's normal way of working. A pupil will be granted the use of a word processor following a referral from a teacher and/ or consultation with a parent, and has one or more of the following: a learning difficulty which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to write legibly; a medical condition; a physical disability; a sensory impairment; planning and organisational problems when writing by hand or poor/ illegible handwriting.

Senior School exams

Saint Nicholas School follows the requirements stipulated by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) regarding access arrangements for public examinations. These are detailed in the publication 'Access Arrangements, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration'. It should be noted that sitting an examination in an alternative location to the main cohort is an access arrangement, and as such this will only be granted to pupils that have this additional entitlement.

All queries regarding access arrangements should be discussed with the SENCo.

8. Expertise and training of staff

At Saint Nicholas School training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff to develop their ability to meet pupils' individual needs. Teaching staff and support staff are encouraged to attend training sessions organised by external organisations which focus on developing specific areas of learning and learning difficulties.

The Headmaster and the SENCo will continuously monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

9. Links with external professional agencies

External agencies may be referred to for support, advice or assessment. Saint Nicholas School has close links with external agencies, and can support parents with contacting recommended professionals. Parents are always welcome to source other professionals to work with or approach those on the school's recommended list.

These professionals/services include:

- Educational psychologists
- Clinical psychologists and psychiatrists
- Speech and language therapists
- Occupational therapists
- Counselling services/Play Therapists
- Dyslexia teachers/tutors

It should be noted that any support from private external professionals may incur an additional cost.

10. Admission, transition and accessibility arrangements

10.1 Admission arrangements

All offers of a place at the School depend upon prospective children meeting the School's entry criteria.

The School must feel reasonably sure that throughout the child's time at the School, it will be able to educate and develop the prospective child to the best of his/her potential and in line with the general standards achieved by the child's peers. The School policy is to apply these criteria to all children and potential children, regardless of any disability of which it is made aware by parents. The School has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments not to put any disabled child or potential child at a substantial disadvantage compared with other children who are not disadvantaged because of disability. Saint Nicholas School requires parents to inform the School in respect of the disability of a prospective child in the relevant section of the application form. In assessing any child or prospective child, the School may take such advice and require such assessments e.g., Educational Psychologist's report, and recommendations as it regards as appropriate.

Parents are asked to inform the school if their child has any history of additional needs or difficulties on entry. A copy of any formal assessment reports or diagnostic reports should be supplied to the school. Parents should be aware that failure to disclose such information can have a serious adverse impact on the School's ability to determine whether the School is the right learning environment for the pupil. Failure to make a full disclosure may result in a place being withdrawn.

The School will do all that is reasonable to comply with its legal and moral responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 & the Equality Act 2010 in order to accommodate the needs of applicants who have such disabilities for which, with reasonable adjustments, the School can cater adequately. The School welcomes pupils with special educational needs (SEN) providing that its learning support department can offer them the support that they require. We welcome pupils with disabilities provided that the setting and site appropriate to the child's age can accommodate them with reasonable adjustments. The School will discuss thoroughly with parents

and their medical advisers the adjustments that can reasonably be made for the child if s/he becomes a pupil at the School.

Whilst reasonable adjustments can be made, all places are offered on the basis that the pupil is physically, socially and emotionally able to benefit from the School's faster pace of learning. The final decision on whether the school can support any pupil rests with the Headmaster.

10.2 Transition

The main transition occurs in Year 6, where the majority of pupils will progress to the Senior School at Saint Nicholas. In the case of a pupil leaving to attend another school, the SENCo will liaise with the SENCo of the new school and transfer all relevant information as permitted by the parents. Offers of a visit by the SENCo can be made if it is thought this would be helpful.

Whilst we do our utmost to support pupils with SEND, we recognise that in some instances Saint Nicholas may not be able to meet changing or developing needs. Where this is a concern we will discuss options with parents as early as possible. If it is felt that a pupil's needs can no longer be accommodated by reasonable adjustments made by the school, consideration will be given to whether the pupil can successfully transition into the Senior School at Saint Nicholas. If this is the case, the SENCo will support parents with identifying the appropriate assessment routes and will also assist with a managed move to a more suitable setting.

Form 8 applications, file notes and SEND files for pupils who leave Saint Nicholas at the end of Year 11, will be forwarded to the pupils next educational setting at the start of the new academic year.

10.3 Accessibility arrangements

Please refer to the schools accessibility policy, which can be found on the school website.

11. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to the following documents

- **Accessibility plan**
- Whole School Behaviour Policy
- **Equality information and objectives**
- Medical and First Aid Policy
- Attendance policy
- Child protection policy
- Parental Complaints Policy