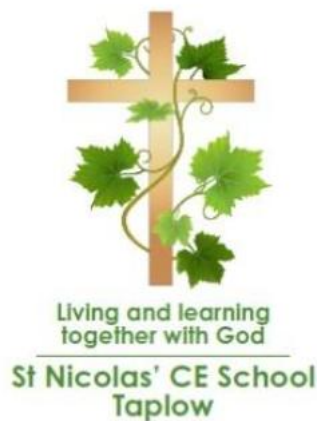




SEND Policy

St Nicolas' Church of England Vision

Jesus said 'I am the vine and you are the branches'.

Our school is rooted in the Christian Faith. Nourished by God, we want to grow together drawing on His strength to live out our Christian values so that we can reach out to others in our community. We are all unique but together with God we want to be the best that we can be. As we learn together in a supportive and nurturing school, we will thrive and be ready to face the challenges of life.

Members of staff responsible:

Head Teacher: Ms Rebecca Holmes Contact details: schooloffice@stnicolastaplow.com

SEND CO: Mrs Lucy Birch Contact details: schooloffice@stnicolastaplow.com

SEND Governor

Date of policy: September 2026

Next review due: September 2027

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1. Aims and objectives

Our SEND policy aims to:

- Fully implement national legislation and guidance regarding pupils with SEND
- Support and make provision for pupils with SEND
- Ensure full inclusion of pupils with SEND in all aspects of school life so they can learn, play and develop alongside their peers
- Help pupils with SEND fulfil their aspirations and achieve their best
- Help pupils with SEND become confident individuals living fulfilling lives
- Communicate with pupils with SEND and their parents/carers and involve them in decisions about support and provision
- Explain the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in providing for pupils with SEND
- Ensure the SEND policy is understood and implemented consistently by all staff
- Create a culture where every child is valued, respected and belongs

2. Vision and values

At St Nicolas', we provide all pupils with access to a 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. We are deeply committed to inclusion and believe that every child, regardless of their needs, has the right to learn and develop alongside their peers in a supportive, nurturing environment.

Inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We are focused on creating an inclusive environment, where provision is tailored to the needs and abilities of pupils, no matter how varied. We believe that diversity enriches our school community and that all children benefit from learning together.

We believe that:

- Every teacher is a teacher of every child, including those with SEND
- All pupils are valued equally, belong to our school community, and have the right to develop their full potential
- Pupils with SEND should be fully included in all aspects of school life, including lessons, trips, assemblies, clubs and social activities
- Pupils with SEND should have their needs identified early and met through high-quality provision
- Parents and carers are partners in their child's education
- Pupils should be actively involved in decisions about their support
- We will work collaboratively with external agencies to provide the best outcomes for our pupils
- Inclusion benefits all pupils by promoting understanding, empathy and respect for difference

Our commitment to inclusion means that:

- We remove barriers to learning and participation for all pupils
- We adapt our teaching, curriculum and environment to meet diverse needs
- We celebrate difference and promote a culture of acceptance and belonging
- We ensure pupils with SEND have equal opportunities to participate in all school activities
- We foster positive relationships between all pupils, promoting understanding and friendship

- We work in partnership with families to ensure every child feels valued and supported

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on:

- SEND Code of Practice 0-25 (January 2015)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Regulations 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- School Admissions Code
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- The Buckinghamshire Local Offer

The school is aware of proposed reforms to the SEND system and will review and update this policy as new legislation and guidance is published.

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

Inclusion is a fundamental principle of our school. We strive to create an inclusive teaching environment that offers all pupils a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum. We are committed to offering all pupils the chance to thrive and fulfil their aspirations.

We believe that inclusion means:

- All pupils learning together in mainstream classrooms wherever possible
- Removing barriers to learning and participation
- Valuing diversity and celebrating difference
- Ensuring every child feels they belong
- Providing appropriate support that enables full participation
- Fostering positive relationships and mutual respect among all pupils

We will achieve this by making reasonable adjustments to teaching, the curriculum and the school environment to ensure pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life, including:

- All lessons and learning activities
- School trips, visits and residential experiences
- Extra-curricular clubs and activities
- School performances, assemblies and celebrations
- Break times, lunchtimes and social opportunities
- School events and community activities

We recognise that inclusion is an ongoing journey and are committed to continuously improving our practice to ensure every child can participate fully and achieve their potential.

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability that calls for 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 generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools

Special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children of the same age by 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 negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. The school will make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities to ensure they can participate fully in all aspects of school life alongside 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.

Communication and interaction - 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 not understand or use the social rules of communication. This includes children with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Cognition and learning - Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. This includes specific learning difficulties (SpLD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia, moderate learning difficulties (MLD), severe learning difficulties (SLD), and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) - These needs may reflect a wide range of underlying difficulties or disorders. Pupils may have mental health difficulties such as anxiety, depression or an eating disorder, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) or attachment disorder, or suffered adverse childhood experiences. These needs can manifest as challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour, or by the pupil becoming withdrawn or isolated.

Sensory and/or physical - Pupils with these needs have a disability that hinders them from accessing the educational facilities generally provided. This includes sensory impairments such as vision impairment (VI), hearing impairment (HI) or multi-sensory impairment (MSI), and physical impairment or physical disability (PD).

5.4 Important considerations

- Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean a child has SEND
- Slow progress and low attainment do not automatically mean a child has SEND
- English as an Additional Language (EAL) is not SEND
- Short-term causes of impact on behaviour or performance (such as bullying or bereavement) will be considered

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO (Mrs Lucy Birch)

The SENCO will:

- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy
- Coordinate provision for pupils with SEND, including those with EHC plans
- Champion inclusion and ensure pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise with staff, parents, and external agencies
- Advise on the graduated approach and differentiated teaching methods
- Help staff identify pupils with SEND at the earliest opportunity
- Support teachers in devising strategies and drawing up SEND Provision Maps

- Liaise closely with parents of pupils with SEND
- Be the point of contact for external agencies
- Maintain the school's SEND register and records
- Prepare and review information for the school's SEND information report
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision
- Advise on the deployment of the school's SEND budget

6.2 The Governing Body

The governing board will:

- Ensure every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Ensure pupils with SEND are fully included in school activities alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Promote a culture of inclusion throughout the school
- Publish information on the school's website about SEND provision in a SEND information report
- Ensure there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision
- Review the SEND policy annually

6.3 The SEND Governor (Mr Paul Tracey)

The SEND Governor will:

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision
- Monitor the school's inclusive practice and culture
- Meet regularly with the SENDCo
- Report to the governing body on SEND matters
- Ensure the school's SEND Information Report is published and updated annually

6.4 The Head Teacher (Ms Rebecca Holmes)

The Head Teacher will:

- Work with the SENCO and SEND Governor to determine the strategic development of SEND policy and provision
- Lead the school's commitment to inclusion and ensure it is embedded in all aspects of school life
- Have overall responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND and their progress
- Monitor the school's notional SEND budget
- Ensure the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment

6.5 Class Teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Providing high-quality teaching differentiated to meet pupil needs
- Ensuring pupils with SEND are fully included in all classroom activities and feel valued members of the class
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with teaching assistants and specialist staff
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress
- Communicating regularly with parents/carers
- Contributing to SEND Provision Maps and review meetings
- Promoting positive attitudes towards difference and fostering inclusive classroom environments

6.6 Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants will:

- Be fully aware of the school's SEND policy and procedures

- Work as part of a team with the SENDCo and teachers
- Support the inclusion of pupils with SEND in all activities
- Play a key role in implementing SEND Provision Maps
- Provide feedback to teachers about pupils' progress
- Help pupils with SEND develop independence and participate fully in lessons

6.7 Parents or carers

Parents/carers should inform the school if they have any concerns about their child's progress. Parents/carers of pupils on the SEND register will be:

- Invited to termly meetings to review provision
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEND support outside school
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and agree aspirations for the pupil
- Given regular updates on the pupil's progress
- Involved as partners in supporting their child's inclusion and participation in school life

6.8 The pupil

Pupils will be given the opportunity to:

- Explain their strengths and difficulties
- Contribute to setting targets or outcomes
- Attend review meetings
- Give feedback on the effectiveness of interventions
- Share their views about how they feel included in school life

7. SEND information report

The school publishes a SEND information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented. The information report will be updated annually and can be found on the school website under the "About Us, Key Information" tab.

8. Our approach to SEND support

8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

We believe early identification is crucial. Staff will assess each pupil's skills and attainment when they start at the school, building on information from previous settings.

Class teachers will regularly assess progress for all pupils and identify those whose progress:

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

When teachers identify slow progress, they will target the pupil's area of weakness with differentiated high-quality teaching. If progress does not improve, the teacher will raise the issue with the SENCO.

Parents should initially discuss concerns with their child's class teacher or contact the SENDCo (Mrs Lucy Birch) directly by booking an appointment through the school office.

8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents/carers

We put the pupil and their parents/carers at the heart of all decisions. When identifying whether a pupil needs special education provision, we will have an early discussion with the pupil and their parents/carers. We will formally notify parents/carers when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

8.3 The graduated approach to SEND support

The school uses TES Provision Map to support the Assess, Plan, Do, Review system.

High-quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Our aim is always to support pupils to learn and participate alongside their peers in the classroom wherever possible.

Once a pupil is identified as having SEND, we will take action through a four-part cycle:

- 1. ASSESS** - The class teacher and SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs, drawing on teacher assessment, previous progress, views of parents/carers and the pupil, and advice from external services if relevant.
- 2. PLAN** - In consultation with parents/carers and the pupil, the teacher and SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put in place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review (at least termly). Plans will focus on enabling full participation in classroom learning and school life. Information will be recorded on TES Provision Map and Arbor.
- 3. DO** - The class teacher retains overall responsibility for the pupil's progress. Support will be provided in ways that promote inclusion and independence. The SENCO will support the teacher in assessing the pupil's strengths and weaknesses and advising on effective implementation of support.
- 4. REVIEW** - Class teachers meet with the SENDCo at least once every half term to review progress. Formal reviews take place three times a year with parents/carers and the pupil. We will evaluate the impact based on views of parents/carers and pupils, progress made, and views of teaching staff. Reviews will also consider how well the pupil is included in all aspects of school life.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEND support - Pupils receiving SEND support will be placed on the SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Support will be provided in ways that enable pupils to remain fully included in their class and participate in all school activities. On the census these pupils will be marked with code K.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan - Pupils who need more support than is available through school-based SEND provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. This is a legal document that describes the pupil's needs, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought. On the census these pupils will be marked with code E.

We will consider requesting an EHC needs assessment when:

- The pupil has severe and complex needs
- The pupil requires significantly higher support than can be provided from the school's SEND budget
- Despite high-quality interventions, the pupil continues to make little or no progress
- External specialists recommend an EHC needs assessment

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEND provision

We evaluate effectiveness by:

- Tracking pupils' progress using TES Provision Map and Arbor
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from pupils and parents/carers
- Analysis of pupil tracking data and comparison with peers
- Monitoring the extent to which pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life
- Gathering pupil voice about their sense of belonging and inclusion

8.6 Criteria for exiting the SEND register

A pupil may be removed from the SEND register when:

- They have made sustained progress and the gap with their peers has closed
- They no longer require provision that is additional to or different from quality first teaching
- All parties (teacher, SENDCo, parents, pupil and any external professionals) agree

9. Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. We recognise that some pupils with SEND may have medical appointments, periods of absence due to their disability, anxiety or mental health needs that impact attendance, or difficulty with transitions.

Our approach to supporting pupils who are absent from school due to their SEND is set out in our attendance policy. We work closely with families to overcome barriers to attendance so that pupils with SEND can benefit from learning alongside their peers.

10. Safeguarding

We recognise that pupils with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Children with disabilities are more likely to be abused than their peers and additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse, exploitation and neglect.

We will ensure that all staff are aware of the additional vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND, communication methods are adapted to ensure all pupils can report concerns, and pupils with SEND have access to appropriate pastoral support.

Wellbeing Support includes:

- An evaluated PSHE curriculum
- Pupil message boxes in every classroom
- Social skills groups
- Healthy School status
- Access to a play therapist
- Encouragement to speak to staff about worries

For more details, see our safeguarding/child protection policy. The school has a policy for Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions, which can be found on the school website.

11. Expertise and training of staff

All teachers and support staff undertake induction including a meeting with the SENDCo to explain systems and structures around SEND provision and discuss the needs of individual pupils.

The Head Teacher and SENDCo will continuously monitor to identify staff training needs and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

Training opportunities include:

- Whole school training on SEND and inclusive practice
- Training on inclusive teaching strategies and removing barriers to learning
- Individual coaching and mentoring
- Access to external training and expertise
- Specialist training on specific areas of need
- Training on specific interventions and programmes
- Training on promoting positive attitudes towards difference and diversity

The SENDCo will keep up to date through attendance at training and cluster meetings, specialist training discussions with outside specialists, and engagement with local authority SEND services.

12. Links with external professional agencies

We may involve specialists at any point to advise on early identification, effective support and interventions, strategies to support progress, and staff training needs. We work collaboratively with external agencies to ensure pupils with SEND can participate fully in school life.

External agencies we work with include:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Autism Outreach Team
- Sensory Support Services
- School Nurse
- Social Care
- Specialist teachers or support services
- Behaviour Support Service

Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. The school will obtain parental consent before making referrals, provide information to support assessments, implement recommendations, and monitor the impact.

13. Admission and accessibility arrangements

13.1 Admission arrangements

The school welcomes applications from parents of children with SEND and is committed to including all pupils in our school community. All prospective pupils whose EHC plan names St Nicolas' will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

The SENDCo will meet with parents of pupils who are known to have SEND prior to entry to discuss provision and address any concerns. We work proactively to ensure smooth transitions and that pupils with SEND feel welcomed and included from day one.

13.2 Accessibility arrangements

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure pupils with disabilities are not at a substantial disadvantage. All pupils, including those with disabilities, have equal access to the full curriculum and all aspects of school life. Reasonable adjustments are made to teaching, resources and the environment.

We are committed to:

- Removing physical barriers to access
- Adapting the curriculum to ensure all pupils can participate
- Providing information in accessible formats
- Ensuring all school activities and trips are accessible to pupils with SEND
- Creating an inclusive environment where all pupils feel they belong

St Nicolas' Accessibility Plan forms part of our Equality Plan and Policy, which can be found on the school website under the "About Us, Key Information" tab.

14. Complaints about SEND provision

Informal Resolution: Parents/carers should first raise concerns informally with the class teacher, SENDCo (Mrs Lucy Birch), or Head Teacher (Ms Rebecca Holmes).

Formal Complaints: If informal resolution does not resolve concerns, formal complaints should be made to the Head Teacher. They will be handled in line with the school's complaints policy.

Escalating Complaints: If parents are not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. For complaints about EHC needs assessments and EHC plans, parents have the right to disagreement resolution services, mediation, and appeal to the SEND Tribunal.

For information about disagreement resolution and mediation services in Buckinghamshire, see:

<https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/localoffer.page>

15. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

15.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We will evaluate how effective our SEND provision is with regards to:

- How early pupils are identified as having SEND
- Pupils' progress and attainment once identified as having SEND
- Whether pupils with SEND feel safe, valued, included and that they belong in our school community
- The extent to which pupils with SEND participate fully in all aspects of school life
- Comments and feedback from pupils and parents/carers
- The impact of interventions and support provided
- Staff confidence and competence in supporting pupils with SEND
- The inclusive culture and ethos of the school

15.2 Monitoring the policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher and SENDCo every year and approved by the governing board. The SEND Governor (Mr Paul Tracey) will monitor the implementation of this policy and report to the governing board on its effectiveness.

16. Links with other policies and documents

This policy links to:

- SEND Information Report
- The Buckinghamshire Local Offer
- Accessibility Plan (part of our Equality Plan and Policy)
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Plan and Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Use of Force & Restraint Policy

All policies can be found on the school website under the "About Us, Key Information" tab.

This policy will be reviewed by governors in consultation with the Head Teacher and SENDCo on an annual basis.