



# St Thomas More Language College

*Serving God, Striving for Excellence*

## Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy



**2017 Update**

### **Definition of Special Educational Needs**

---

Children have special educational needs if they have a *learning difficulty*, which calls for *special educational provision* to be made for them.

Children have a *learning difficulty* if they:

- a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- b) have a disability, which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority.
- c) Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children must not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

*Special educational provision means:*

- a) *for children of two and over, educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools in the area*
  - b) *for children under two, educational provision of any kind.*
- (Section 312, Education Act 1996)*

### **Definition of Disability**

---

*\* A child is disabled if he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from a mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed.*

*(Section 17 (11), Children Act 1989.*

*\* A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.*

*(Section 1 (1), Disability Discrimination Act 1995*

*At St Thomas More Language College the above definitions will be used to ensure that any child who is entitled to support because of their special educational needs and/or disability will receive such support as deemed necessary. In turn all such pupils will be fully included in the school community, reach their full potential as learners and eventually make a successful transition to adulthood.*

***Serving God, Striving for excellence***

## Philosophy

---

*The following points embody the working philosophy of support for pupils with special educational needs.*

- *Every pupil is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum through which they can progress according to ability, talents and interests.*
- *The governors and staff of St Thomas More Language College recognize that pupils with special educational needs can expect to have the same opportunity to experience success and be fully integrated into all aspects of school life.*
- *All pupils and teachers are encouraged to develop an awareness of and respect for individual differences be they race, gender or ability.*
- *St Thomas More Language College recognizes that pupils learn best when all their needs are met. All aspects of a pupil's development need to be considered to promote a positive learning environment. Some pupils with special educational needs have experienced emotional and behavioural problems, which have been detrimental to their learning and these pupils will also receive support in order for them to fulfil their potential as learners and achievers.*
- *The college accepts responsibility for all its pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is seen as part of the total range of provision.*
- *All pupils can learn and make progress even in very small steps.*
- *Pupils with the greatest needs require and deserve the greatest support.*
- *The college is a "listening college" and therefore takes the comments/views of teachers, pupils, parents, the wider community and external agencies into account when planning and delivering provision.*
- *St Thomas More Language College recognizes and values the key role of parents and pupils as valuable stakeholders in a young person's education. Every effort will be made to involve them in planning, formulating and delivering effective support for special educational needs.*

## Integration & Meeting Needs

---

*To enable all pupils to be fully integrated into all aspects of school life we need to be aware of their physical, emotional and learning needs.*

In order to best match the curriculum to the pupil, teachers need to be aware of the physical, emotional and academic needs of the pupils they teach, including their attainment levels in literacy and numeracy. St Thomas More Language College prides itself on the fact that all teachers are teachers of pupils with special educational needs.

Teachers dealing with a pupil on a regular basis should know as much about a pupil's background in order to respond appropriately to their needs.

All pupils identified as having a special educational need will be included on the College's SEND Register. This is made available to all staff. Pupils are categorized as follows: -

- a) targeted pupils whose needs are identified and supported through Quality First teaching. These pupils may also benefit from support and involvement from external agencies.
- b) pupils whose needs are supported by a full *Statement of Special Educational Needs*.

The SENCO, Head of Year / Head of Department / Subject Department Link Figure share responsibility for ensuring that information is relayed to teachers.

***Serving God, Striving for excellence***

The SENCO has responsibility for ensuring a pupil's access to specialist teachers and/or other facilities available to the school.

It is expected that all pupils at St Thomas More Language College will have full access to the National Curriculum unless they have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which recommends disapplication from a particular area. Any disapplication will only be considered after full consultation with the pupil, their parents and all professionals concerned in the education of the pupil.

## **Procedures**

---

At St Thomas More Language College the Learning Support Department does not have sole responsibility for the education of pupils with special educational needs. The college prides itself on the fact that *all* teachers are responsible for meeting a pupil's needs and thus ensuring an effective whole school response to the wide and diverse needs of its pupils.

The College follows a staged procedure for the identification, assessment, monitoring and review of progress of pupils with SEND as laid out in the Department for Education and Skills "Special Educational Needs / Code of Practice".

The College is primarily responsible for targeted pupils identified as having a specific need which is causing underachievement. The Local Education Authority where the child is resident takes joint responsibility with the school for pupils with a full *Statement of Special Educational Needs/Education, Health and Care Plan*.

For all pupils with special educational needs the child's classroom teacher will always be involved in assessing that child, providing a programme of support and reviewing progress. Initial concerns and a programme of action will be recorded by the class teacher and discussed with Head of Year or Head of Department. It is for these teachers to begin the process of identification by raising their concerns with the SENCO/Learning Support Department. The SENCO will have an oversight of the identification, assessment, monitoring and review of progress of pupils with SEND. The most important role of the SENCO and members of the Learning Support Department is one of working with a pupil's teacher in arriving at strategies to help and support him or her in obtaining entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. Even when the child requires involvement of external agencies the class or subject teacher needs to remain involved in decisions regarding a pupil's education.

## **Identification**

---

Pupils are identified as having SEND through any or a combination of the following factors:

- Primary school records
- Screening tests in reading, spelling verbal reasoning, cognitive functioning and numeracy carried out before or soon after the pupil enters the school.
- Concerns of the subject teacher/class teacher reported to the Learning Support Department by the Head of Year or Head of Department.
- Parental concerns.
- Pupil's self-referral.
- Learning Support Staff working in mainstream classes.
- School based assessments procedures, tracking, interim reports, annual reports
- School Medical Services / Educational Welfare Services / Social Services.

## **Assessment**

---

St Thomas More Language College recognizes that special educational needs vary in intensity and duration and that provision has to be matched accordingly. Any pupil identified will have their needs assessed by drawing together relevant information from as many sources as possible. The SENCO is ultimately responsible for overseeing the collation of information from all agencies involved with a pupil with SEND and for dissemination of relevant information to all staff working with that pupil. This may be achieved through individual meetings with teachers or through the subject department link figure.

## **Monitoring**

---

The monitoring of pupils identified as having mild special educational needs will be the responsibility of the subject or class teacher, Head of Department and Head of Year. For each child in the SEND register, a “strategy sheet” is made available to all staff to suggest techniques which aid their learning.

## **Reviewing**

---

An intervention is set each term after discussion with the pupil, a member of Learning Support department and parent. This clarifies what support will be available, and the success criteria. Towards the end of term progress will be assessed and reviewed.

## **Teaching Support**

---

The majority of pupils identified as having SEND and needing additional support are most likely to be supported in the classroom situation so ensuring entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum. For some pupils who experience more pronounced difficulties with learning and/or behaviour, withdrawal from lessons either individually or in small groups may be deemed more appropriate.

Withdrawal lessons may be used for: -

- developing language skills
- developing numeracy skills
- personal & social development
- teaching/differentiating the mainstream subject from which the pupil is withdrawn.

## **Differentiation & Responsibility**

---

*At St Thomas More Language College all pupils are entitled to teaching from all subject teachers. Primarily the needs of all our pupils will be met through a differentiated curriculum within the mainstream classroom. The SENCO and staff from the Learning Support Department are available to collaborate with subject departments and subject teachers in the following ways: -*

- Ensuring that classwork and homework tasks are analysed and structured to encourage success and enjoyment, thus enhancing self-esteem. Pupils should work on tasks appropriate to their ability and attainment levels.
- INSET can be offered to both individual staff and departments to look at ways of successfully managing and developing differentiation strategies.
- The Learning Support Department is available to work with individual colleagues and/or subject departments on the production of suitable materials for pupils.
- Programmes of study for individuals and groups will be developed as far as possible through collaboration between Learning Support Department members and subject specialists.

- Guidance and support will always be available on the setting of differentiated examinations and class tests, which will enable pupils with SEND to demonstrate what knowledge and skills they have acquired. This may include the use of readers or scribes.
- The Learning Support Department will endeavour to help develop and locate teaching materials, which match pupil's abilities, interests and attainment levels.

## **The Role of the Governing Body**

---

The Governing Body of St Thomas More Language College will ensure that all children at the college have the opportunity to fulfil their potential as learners and achievers. This will be achieved by considering the special educational needs of all pupils whenever issues relating to particular groups of children, physical resources, curriculum or financial matters are discussed. In more specific terms the Governors will:

- Ensure that the college prospectus will include a reference to this specific whole college policy on meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and that the policy is available to parents if and when requested.
- Ensure that the college has followed the national guidance in meeting the needs of such pupils and that the college has regard to the Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs. In turn they will ensure that appropriate provision has been made for such pupils.
- Endeavour to seek training about issues regarding special educational needs from either the LEA or other relevant governor training organisations so that they can become better informed.
- Ensure that they fully support the staff in the college in all attempts to provide an appropriate and suitably differentiated curriculum for all pupils.
- Ensure that the issues regarding special educational needs will be discussed fully by the appropriate sub-committee of the governing body and/or any other college body concerned with such matters.
- Ensure that SEND funding available to the school is correctly allocated and that the use of such funds is both appropriate and effective.
- The Governing Body will ensure that they are active in having a strategic oversight of SEND and further ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil at the college who has special educational needs.
- The Governing Body will actively support the principle that the parents of a pupil with special educational needs should work in partnership with the college in assessing, meeting and reviewing such needs.
- The Governing Body will ensure that an appropriate and named Governor will have specific responsibility for ensuring that all of the targets set out above are adhered to. This named Governor will also be the person to whom any complaints regarding special educational needs provision will be addressed should any such complaints not be dealt with effectively by the college. Ms S Flockton undertakes this role during the academic year 2016-2017.

## **Students & Parents**

### **Students**

---

All pupils have the right to experience success and by doing so their self-esteem will be enhanced. The views and experiences of pupils form an important part of any evaluation/review of their needs and progress. At St Thomas More Language College their opinions are valued and used in planning and delivering provision. All pupils with special educational needs will be encouraged to take some responsibility for their learning. They will be actively encouraged to contribute to intervention plans and strategy sheets and where appropriate Annual Reviews and Transition Plans. As a result it is hoped that all pupils will become involved in reviewing their own progress and planning to meet their needs.

## Parents

---

At St Thomas More Language College parents are urged to see themselves as partners with the college in the context of promoting their child's learning. Parental involvement and agreement is actively encouraged at every stage of determining, supporting and reviewing a pupil's special educational needs. Pupils will only reach their full potential as learners if parents are encouraged to work with the college in supporting and understanding a pupil's needs.

The concept of parents as partners is one, which is actively fostered at the college. It is recognized that the knowledge, views and experiences of parents form a vital part in a child's education. Parents will be actively encouraged to become "involved" in their child's education as soon as they have been informed about a proposal to place their child on the SEND Register. Parents will actively be involved in formulating, implementing and reviewing Intervention Plans. For pupils who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC plan the role of parents as partners is of paramount importance. Parents will always be encouraged to fully participate in Annual Reviews and, when appropriate, transition planning.

The college fully recognizes the fact that some parents may feel uncomfortable or daunted by having to work as a "partner" with the college. In light of this the college will always attempt to support parents as far as possible in this role. The Learning Support Department has facilities to meet parents in comfortable surroundings so they feel welcome, confident and comfortable. Where parents may experience literacy or communication difficulties the services of a translator or other forms of support will be sought and used to ensure they make as full a contribution as possible. The college's SEND policy can be made available in a range of community languages, in a taped version or on computer disk.

If for some reason a parent has a complaint about any issue regarding the effective education of their child then they will be invited to make an appointment to discuss their concerns with Ms Athaide, SENCO. On any rare occasion where complaints cannot be resolved at this stage they will be invited to meet with the Headteacher and/or school governors to discuss their concerns further.

## Resources

---

The Learning Support suite consisting of three rooms is used as a resource base and teaching area. Pupils may be taught in this area in small groups or individually. The department is linked to the main school network. There are five computers in one room and this particular resource is used extensively by both pupils and staff. The department currently has four computers for use by pupils. All SEND teachers possess ICT skills. The department has an active ongoing policy as part of its development plan to expand the range of software used to develop basic skills. The department has its own interactive whiteboard.

Each room in the Learning Support Suite is well furnished and designed to ensure that effective learning takes place in an environment where the pupil feels supported.

The Learning Support Office is situated next to the Learning Support Suite and houses all files and confidential information relating to pupils.

The department is relatively well resourced in terms of textbooks, reading materials and mainstream curriculum subject support materials. Many teaching materials and worksheets are developed by teachers within the department. These materials are used extensively to support pupil's access to the curriculum and/or the development of basic skills.

## Finances

---

The Learning Support Department has received a departmental spending allowance of £1,600.00 for the financial year 2016 – 2017. The total sum of money allocated will be spent on books, ICT resources, reprographics and educational materials to support pupil's access to the curriculum and/or the development of basic skills.

## Teaching Staff for Pupils with SEND

---

The Learning Support Department is a department that supports the wide and diverse needs of pupils at St Thomas More Language College. This encompasses Special Educational Needs.

The SEND Co-ordinator (SENCO) is the overall Head of Learning Support. There is currently one full time teacher in the department with specific responsibility for special educational needs. : Ms J. Athaide: SENCO.

Pupils who are in possession of a Statement of Special Educational Needs/EHC Plan have an Individual Support Teacher (IST) and/or a Learning Support Assistant allocated to support their individual needs according to the amount of time designated on their statement. Individual Support Teachers and Learning Support Assistants are employed directly by the school (and in some cases via an agency). In fulfilling their day-to-day teaching duties they are responsible to the SENCO in the first instance.

The following are members of the Special Educational Needs Department.

1. Mrs R Kopicio                      Teacher on permanent contract
2. Ms J Ainsworth                    Teacher on permanent contract

The following members of staff are Learning Support Assistants employed directly by the College.

1. Ms C Hartness (HTLA)      36.0 hrs per week

In addition five LSAs are employed on a supply basis until July 2017.

## Sharing Information

---

At St Thomas More Language College information relating to the needs of pupils is shared via the network to ensure a fully coordinated and effective whole school response to special educational needs. It is recognized that this is important to raise awareness of the needs of pupils and to share successful practices, resources and methods. Information is gained and disseminated through the following methods.

- **Pastoral Links**

The SENCO will meet regularly with the Inclusion team to monitor the progress of individual pupils and discuss possible referrals within each year group.

- **Inclusion**

The SENCO is timetabled to meet fortnightly with the school's Inclusion Manager to discuss strategies of support for individual pupils, referrals to other agencies and wider school policy on Inclusion/Behaviour Management.

- **External Links**

*The school has regular contact with many outside agencies to ensure the fullest possible support for pupils.*

The SENCO meets regularly with the school nurse, Educational Welfare Officer and if necessary Social Services to discuss and/or monitor any pupil causing concern.

The SENCO meets regularly with the school's Educational Psychologist.

The SENCO and/or members of the Learning Support Department endeavour to meet with the school's feeder primary schools to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for pupils with SEND.

The school has established many links with various agencies such as Speech & language Therapy Service, Impaired Hearing Service, Visual Impairment Service.

- **Transition of Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

All pupils with SEND who transfer from St Thomas More Language College will have their SEND records passed to their new school, Further Education College or world of work for post 16 pupils.

The school has a policy for ensuring extensive careers guidance for all pupils with SEND before they transfer from the school at the end of Year 11.

## **Timetabling**

---

Teacher or Learning Support Assistant periods to support pupils with SEND are allocated by the SENCO. Support teaching periods are allocated according to the greatest need and for statemented pupils the statutory guidelines outlined under Part III of their statement. Support depends largely on what pupils needs are and how they can best be met. Provision for a pupil with special educational needs will as far as possible match the nature of their needs. At St Thomas More Language College pupils can be offered support in a variety of ways: -

- From their own class teacher / subject teacher or another member of a subject department's own staff.
- Through additional support from a member of the Learning Support Department either in class or on an individual or small group basis.
- A member of Learning Support Department and/or the pupil's own class teacher designing or locating materials to differentiate and/or support access to the curriculum.
- Pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs will receive support from their own Individual Support Teacher and/or Learning Support Assistant. This support will be allocated according to the aims and objectives of each individual statement and may be a combination of either in-class or withdrawal support.

The support offered to pupils with special educational needs has by its very nature to be both flexible and adaptable to changing needs. Support may therefore follow any or a combination of the strategies listed above.

- Support is allocated to core subjects as a priority. The number of pupils on the SEND register in any group helps to decide which class is supported and how many additional adults are present.

## **Arrangements for SEND In-Service Training**

---

The in-service training and professional development of all staff to help them work effectively with pupils with special educational needs is given a high priority at St Thomas More Language College. The effective implementation of the Code of Practice through the Whole College Policy for SEND is an integral and ongoing component of the school's development plan. The college's general policy on in-service training ensures that maximum use is made of training opportunities provided by the L.E.A. and other organizations involved in special educational needs.

The college has used INSET funding to provide whole school training for staff within school. A number of staff have also taken advantage of opportunities outside of school, which have provided training on SEND

issues from a subject specific viewpoint. Priorities for INSET for 2016 – 2017 revolve around school priorities, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Down Syndrome and Training for Learning Support Assistants.

The college is fortunate that Ms Athaide is a SENCO who has received extensive training in issues relating to SEND, The Code of Practice and the development of an effective Whole College Policy for SEND. In turn Ms Athaide has been able to offer Learning Support teachers, subject departments and subject staff advice and/or training in school. All members of staff within the Learning Support Department have received recent training in issues relating to SEND and the department is confident it can cover the immediate training needs of most staff in the school in such issues. When new members of staff join St Thomas More Language College they can be offered induction on how the Whole College Policy for SEND operates.

The college also makes full use of outside agencies and specialists in providing INSET.

### **Performance Indicators**

---

The following criteria will be used to measure the effectiveness of this policy: -

- The number and movement of pupils with SEND on the college's SEND Register. This will be reviewed and monitored twice a year.
- Strategy sheets will be reviewed annually.
- The reading, spelling and numeracy standardised scores of identified pupil with SEND will be tested and recorded once each academic year for year 7-9.
- The levels of achievement of pupils on the SEND Register both in internal and external school tests/examinations.
- The amount and distribution of teaching support allocated to individual pupils and groups of pupils by both the Learning Support and subject departments.
- The views of parents and pupils at reviews.
- The number of departments using appropriately differentiated schemes of work.
- The school's in house Tracking and Behaviour Management System will be closely monitored to see whether SEND pupils are making progress.
- The views of subject department staff, parents, pupils and external agencies will be sought regularly on SEND Policy, practice and performance.
- The results/findings of any external inspection reports or in house school reviews.
- Departmental reviews, Department Improvement Plan, SEF 4 reviews etc. will all contribute towards a performance review of the department.

### **Notes/Comments/Suggestions/Amendments**

---

At St Thomas More Language College staff, pupils and parents have an important role in implementing this policy. Views of stakeholders are always listened to. If you would like to discuss anything contained in this policy, make suggestions for improvement or suggest any amendments to the policy please write them down below and pass in the first instance to Ms Athaide, SENCO.

<b>Person responsible for Policy:</b>	J Athaide SENCO
<b>Policy agreed:</b>	March 2017
<b>Policy to be reviewed:</b>	September 2017