



St Swithun's Prep School

Learning Support - SEND Policy

Policy History	
Reviewed	January 2026
Date of next Review	January 2028

This policy can be accessed on the school's website at www.stswithuns.com

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's [accessibility plan](#) and with the following school policies:

- [Prep School Vision, Aims and Ethos](#)
- [Curriculum Policy](#)
- [English as an Additional Language Policy](#)
- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Behaviour Policy](#)
- [Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Admissions Policy](#)

Values

St Swithun's Prep School is a learning community where all pupils should experience success. We are committed to an inclusive culture where all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are enabled to have equal access to the curriculum in a welcoming, valuing and respectful environment. We understand that sometimes pupils need additional support to enhance development or learning performance and that this in turn is likely to strengthen self-esteem. We always strive to make additional support a positive experience.

Aims

We aim to provide tailored support for girls experiencing difficulties with any aspects of school life linked to the four broad areas of need detailed in the SEND Code of Practice 2015:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Social, Emotional and / or Mental Health Needs
- Sensory and / or physical

The department, referred to in school as The Nest, aims to contribute to the overall school environment in which all pupils are nurtured, intellectually challenged through academic study, stimulated through co-curricular activities and encouraged to achieve of their best.

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Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years \(2015\)](#) and the following legislation:

[Section 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014](#), which details schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND and disabilities.

[The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations \(2014\)](#), which set out schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEND co-ordinators (SENDCOs) and the SEND information report

[The Equality Act 2010](#) and [The Equality Act 2010 and schools May 2014](#)

It is also steered by other SEND guides available from the Department for Education - <https://www.gov.uk/topic/schools-colleges-childrens-services/special-educational-needs-disabilities>

Definition of SEND

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (2015) provides the following definition:

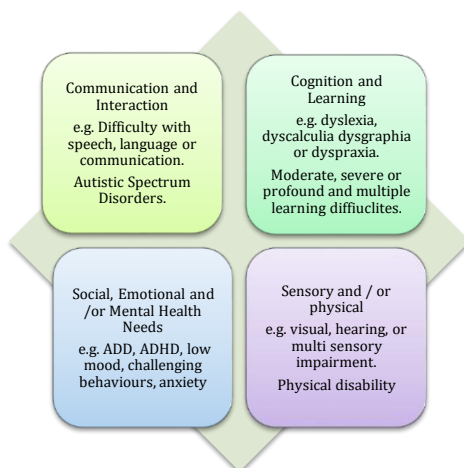
A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age...*

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is '...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'. ... 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

In the SEND Code of Practice there are four broad areas of special educational needs:



The Code states that *“Many children and young people have difficulties that fit clearly into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more areas; for other the precise nature of their needs may not be clear at the outset”*.

Accordingly, our emphasis is on meeting the need rather than simply trying to allocate a label.

Roles and Responsibilities within School

The SENDCo

The SENDCo in the Prep school is Mrs Joanne Copley. She can be contacted via the school office on 01962 835750 or emailed at copleyj@stswithuns.com

The SENDCo:

- works with the Head, Senior Leadership Team and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEN policy and provision in the school;
- has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans;
- maintains a central record and oversees the records of all children with SEND;
- is available to staff for advice and support;
- identifies and contribute to the in-service training of staff;
- co-ordinates the work of the Nest based Learning Support Assistant;
- deploys the school’s resources to meet pupils’ needs effectively;
- is the point of contact for external agencies;
- works with the Head and SEND governor to ensure that the school meets its responsibilities with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements; and
- liaises with the parents of children with SEND.

Council (Governing Body)

The Council seeks to ensure that the needs of all students are met and that the provision made for students with SEND is adequate and secure. Responsibilities are discharged by

- having knowledge of the school's system for identifying any pupils experiencing difficulty;
- having knowledge of the school's course of action for pupils in relation to the code of practice and how resources have been allocated;
- helping to raise awareness of SEND issues at council meetings where appropriate;
- discussing the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision with the Head and SENDCo; and
- ensuring that there is a named 'link governor' who will liaise with the Head and SENDCo.

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The linked Governor is the Chair of Education Committee – Dr S Bailey.

The Head

The Head at St Swithun's Prep School is Mrs Liz Norris. She can be contacted via the school office on 01962 835750 or emailed at norrisl@stswithuns.com

The Head:

- has overall responsibility for the provision and progress of learners with SEN and/or a disability.
- works with the SENDCo, SLT and SEND governor to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in the school.

Class and Specialist Teachers

All teachers must adhere to the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015), with Chapter 6 being a particular focus:

- 6.36 Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff.
- 6.37 High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND. Additional intervention and support cannot compensate for a lack of good quality teaching. Schools should regularly and carefully review the quality of teaching for all pupils, including those at risk of underachievement. This includes reviewing and, where necessary, improving, teachers' understanding of strategies to identify and support vulnerable pupils and their knowledge of the SEND most frequently encountered.

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Every teacher is responsible for:

- the progress and development of every pupil in their class.
- identifying children causing concern and bringing them to the attention of the SENDCo.
- working with the SENDCo to review the progress and development of children causing concern, deciding on any changes in provision that may be beneficial.
- planning for and delivering high quality teaching which is effectively implemented for all children in appropriate ways.

- working closely with any learning support assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and to consider how these can be linked to classroom teaching.
- contributing to the SEND documentation.
- ensuring they follow this SEND policy.

Learning Support Assistants and Non-Teaching Staff

Learning Support assistants are able to meet their responsibilities by:

- working under the direction of the SENDCo;
- assisting in the identification of need through relevant observations and feedback;
- working with teachers to monitor progress of pupils;
- liaising with the SENDCo to deliver SEND provision;
- supporting a SEND pupil on a 1:1 basis in the classroom;
- providing targeted support outside of the classroom;
- working on differentiated activities with groups of students;
- responding appropriately to targeted pupils; and
- contributing to the assessment and review process.

All teaching staff can make the necessary adaptations by flexibly considering:

- groupings
- 1:1 work
- teaching style
- content of the lesson, etc.
- revisiting concepts
- overlearning key concepts
- consolidating
- scaffolding
- adapting our resources and staffing
- using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- personalised teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud etc.

Identification

We endeavour to identify children experiencing difficulty as early as possible so that, where necessary, appropriate additional support can be arranged.

In accordance with our assessment policy, we use a range of **age-appropriate** assessments for all children (detailed further below) and track their performance in relation to their peers and national expectations. It is through this continuous assessment process, careful class-based observations and subsequent analysis that we expect any concerns to be identified initially.

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We aim to identify those children whose progress:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline.
- fails to match or better their previous rate of progress.
- fails to close the attainment gap between the child and their peers.
- suggests that the attainment gap between them and their peers is widening.
- is being impacted by social or emotional difficulties.

A slower rate of progress, under achievement and low attainment will not automatically mean a pupil is recorded as having SEND. Whilst a child is being monitored at this stage, the SENDCo and /or class teacher will initiate some or all of the following:

- appropriate short-term intervention(s)
- class or playground observations
- deployment of a classroom assistant for additional group or individual support
- environmental adjustments such as a concentration screen
- educational adjustments such use of alternative recording strategies
- further internal screening or arranging more formal diagnostic assessments

The SENDCo and EYFS staff use the following, in addition to the whole school assessments, to assist with identification of SEND:

- Identifying Functional Difficulties, NHS Solent Trust
- Hampshire SEND criteria
- Dyslexia Screening - Dyslexic Early Screening Test (DEST), GL assessments
- Pupil Language Profile, Black Sheep Press
- Speech Sound Inventory, Black Sheep Press
- Movement, Balance and Learning Screen, 4-6 years, Hemispheres Occupational Therapy

The SENDCo and year 1-6 staff use the following, in addition to the whole school assessments, to assist with identification of SEND:

- Hampshire SEND Criteria
- Dyslexia Screening – Dyslexia Portfolio, GL assessments
- British Picture Vocabulary Scale
- Renfrew Expressive Language Screen
- Movement, Balance and Learning Screen, 7+ years, Hemispheres Occupational Therapy
- Expertise from Outside Agencies (detailed in section 16)

The SEND registers and levels of support

The learning support registers for St Swithun's Prep school encompass those pupils who have SEND according to the statutory definition / Hampshire SEND criteria as well as those who are identified within the context of St Swithun's Prep School as needing additional support for their academic progress.

The SEND registers include details relating to year group, level and summary of need, external agency involvement, access arrangements and lesson impact.

Staff access the registers electronically as they are continually reviewed: children may have special educational needs either throughout their time at St Swithun's or for only part of the time where they attend the school. With this in mind, some children may be moved from one section to another on the register. Where sufficient progress is made, a child is placed under 'observation' for a term to ensure they can continue to make progress without the additional SEND support. The registers also indicate which of the broad areas of need are most relevant to each child.

The registers also highlight any pupil with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan from a local authority. Where a girl has an EHC plan, this is reviewed annually. Additional support is provided for these students as required. The school and/or parents can request that the local authority make an assessment with a view to an EHC plan being produced. The school consults with the parents in all such cases, and it also liaises with the local authority to ensure that the school can deliver the provision in any EHC plan.

Pupil information

All SEND information is stored electronically on the school's network. Each year group has its own cohort support overview and where appropriate, each girl has her own section which contains a summary of key information, electronic copies of reports or assessments, relevant data, details of previous support as well as information on her current provision. Staff must check the SEND-information regularly and make sure they understand the needs of the children whom they teach. Following the School's GDPR policy protects all information.

Action taken on SEND – The Graduated Approach

The school uses the graduated approach model when supporting children identified as having SEND in order to remove barriers to learning and to put effective provision in place. **This four-part cycle, through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised, is key to securing good outcomes.** It draws on more detailed approaches, more frequent reviews and more specialist expertise in successive cycles in order to match interventions to the needs of the pupil.

HIGH QUALITY TEACHING



Assess: Please refer to the identification process outlined above.

Plan: Once a clear picture of need has been identified, the teacher and SENDCo ensures that appropriate provision is put in place and communicated with the parents and pupil. A timescale is set.

Do: The class or subject teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis whilst communicating closely with those involved in delivering agreed interventions / adjustments.

Review: The effectiveness of the support and / or intervention and the impact on the pupil's progress should be reviewed in line with the agreed date. This informs the planning of next steps for a further period, or the removal of a pupil from SEN support for a period of observation.

SEND and Emotional Literacy Support

Emotional Literacy Support, for needs identified under 'Social, Emotional and /or Mental Health', is provided under the umbrella of the learning support department. The school's Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) is Mrs Alex Henshaw.

The school ELSA:

- works under the direction of the Prep School's Senior Leadership Team, following the school's referral process for ELSA.
- delivers appropriate provision to individuals or groups of children who are experiencing difficulties with emotional literacy or other aspects of school or home life.
- establishes supportive, caring and secure relationships with children, and is someone for a child to talk to.
- liaises with the relevant cluster schools, implementing the advice of the lead educational psychologist.
- ensures that all records and case notes are kept up to date, distributed and filed in accordance with the school's procedures, and that appropriate levels of confidentiality are maintained.
- provides relevant feedback and advice to teaching staff.

Parents

At St Swithun's an effective working relationship with parents is seen as having a crucial bearing on the child's progress and parental involvement is sought as early as possible. Parents are made aware of the role of SENDCo and ELSA at curriculum evenings from the start of each academic year.

When a concern has been raised, and the SENDCo agrees, the class teacher contacts the parents and suggests a meeting with the SENDCo. Together, the SENDCo and class teacher arrange a convenient meeting time. The SENDCo keeps parents updated as and when necessary. Meetings can be made to feed back on progress, to communicate changes in provision or to discuss next steps. Parents also have the opportunity to book an appointment with the SENDCo at parents' evenings.

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Pupils

When appropriate, pupils with SEND are involved in the setting of targets and in their review process. Children with an EHCP contribute to their annual review by means of an interview with their LSA beforehand. When it is deemed appropriate they can attend the meeting, depending on the views of their parents. The school aims to provide opportunities for pupils and parents to be fully engaged in the process.

SEND and Admissions

All girls who visit may be asked to participate in a range of activities and assessments. If there are any concerns about a child's ability to flourish at St Swithun's Prep, this is discussed with parents. Some children may join us with their needs already assessed and, as per the admissions policy and parental contract, parents have a responsibility to inform the School of any assessments already undertaken and/or provision made for SEND in a previous setting.

Resources

All classrooms are well stocked with resources to cater for a variety of educational needs. The SENDCo keeps additional resources which can be used with small groups and in 1:1 support sessions. Resources are lent to teachers as and when needed and there is a variety of reference books, leaflets and advice sheets which the SENDCo makes available to staff.

Resources are purchased in consultation with other teaching staff to cater for individual learning needs. Regular review of resources enables forward planning of future requirements so that requests can be submitted at the appropriate time.

Occasionally the local education authority provides funds for children who have specific requirements; usually this is via an EHCP. Resources purchased are for the sole use of that child. In addition, the local authority may loan equipment when necessary.

School's arrangement for INSET and CPD

St Swithun's has regular INSET days and staff meetings throughout the term, during which SEND issues often feature on the agenda. Use is made of the support services and SEND advisory services to give input with regard to INSET training. St Swithun's staff are encouraged to attend courses and training days to further their expertise and experience in the area of special needs education.

Links with other services

The school recognises the important part specialists play in the early identification of educational difficulties and values their advice on effective provision. Where appropriate, we work in close co-operation with a number of professionals including:

- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Clinical Psychologists
- Optometrists
- CAMHS
- Hearing and Visual Impairment Services
- Physiotherapy Services
- Physical Disability Services
- The Early Years Advisory Service
- Multi Agency Planning
- Adoption Agencies

Pupils for whom English is an additional language

There is a separate policy for English as an Additional Language. The school recognises that a pupil should not be regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language in which they are taught at School is different from the language which is, or has been, spoken at home. Most children for whom English is an additional language do not have a Special Educational Need. However, should such a need be identified the child has equal access to the school’s SEN provision.

Review and development

SEND policy and provision are regularly reviewed. Provision is evaluated in a number of ways, e.g. through monitoring of classroom practice by the SENDCo and class teachers; analysis of pupil data and assessment results; and value-added data for pupils on the learning support register.

Development plans are drawn up in order to increase the impact and effectiveness of this aspect of the school's educational and social role.

This policy has regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State and is in line with the Aims of the school. St Swithun’s Prep School policies are approved, ratified and reviewed regularly by SLT, staff and the Council in the light of statutory requirements.

Commented [SB6]: Council

January 2026	Joanne Copley	Head of Learning Support and SENDCo
	Liz Norris	Prep Head
Ratified by Governors February 2026	Dr S Bailey	Chair of Education Committee