

# St Agnes

## Catholic Primary School

*With Jesus beside us, we do our best*



# Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy

|                            |             |                                       |
|----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------|
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## Our Vision and Values

At St. Agnes we believe that although we are all very different we have a way of living, behaving and doing things that allow us to serve as a witness to the Catholic Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our school motto is: **With Jesus Beside Us We Do Our Best to:**



### **Believe**

We are all valued in God's family and the school family. We **believe** in ourselves and in our abilities.

### **Persevere**

When things get difficult, we will **persevere** so that we will grow stronger, realising we can turn to each other and God.

### **Contribute**

We will **contribute** to the life of the school, the parish, the local community and the wider world to which we all belong.

*By doing these we will:*

### **Achieve**

By being the best we can be, we will **achieve** in making a difference to others and living as God would want us to.

## Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

In the SEN Code of Practice (2014), a child is defined as having special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

### **Children have learning difficulties or disability 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 either prevents or hinders the child from making use of the educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority (LEA);
- 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;

## **Our Rationale**

At St. Agnes' school we are committed to providing an appropriate and high quality education to all children living in our local area. We believe that all children, including those identified as having special educational needs (SEN), have a common entitlement to a broad and balanced academic curriculum. This curriculum must be accessible to all and allow everyone to be fully included in all aspects of school life. Furthermore, we believe that all children should be valued at our school. We are constantly striving to eliminate prejudice and discrimination and to develop an environment where all children can flourish and feel safe.

St. Agnes' school is committed to inclusion. As part of our continuing plans for school improvement, we hope to ingrain cultures, policies and practices which include all learners. We aim to develop a sense of



community within our school and to offer new opportunities for learners to work in the way in which they feel most comfortable, taking account of previous difficulties, life experiences and their learning needs.

We believe that educational inclusion is about equal opportunities for all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, impairment, attainment and background. This policy aims to outline the foundations of our practice for meeting the needs of children who may experience barriers to their learning. These barriers may relate to physical or sensory impairment, emotional or social development, learning difficulties or to factors in the child's environment, such as children on the at risk register.

At St. Agnes we are very aware that children learn at different rates and that there are many factors affecting achievement, including ability, background, emotional state, age and maturity. We acknowledge that at some point in their school career, many pupils will experience difficulties, which will affect their learning, and we recognise that these may be long or short term. We therefore aim to identify need quickly, as it arises, and provide teaching and learning contexts which will continue to enable a child to reach his or her full potential within a full or adjusted timetable.

## Objectives

- 1) To ensure the SEN and Disability Act 2001 and relevant Codes of Practice and guidance are implemented effectively across the school (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents>).
- 2) To continue to monitor our compliance with the 'SEN Code of Practice 0-25 years' (Sept 2014) and the ensuing impact on school policy and practice.
- 3) To ensure equality of opportunity
- 4) for and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against, children with special educational needs. All members of our school community will have a positive perception of diversity.
- 5) To continually monitor the progress of all pupils, to identify needs as they arise and to provide support as early as possible.
- 6) To provide quality first teaching for all our children so that their learning and progress is planned and assessed by qualified teachers, and is specially adapted where children require additional support.
- 7) When children's needs are more complex and/or they are not working to the national curriculum we will offer a bespoke curriculum that is as broad and balanced as possible.
- 8) To ensure that all pupils with SEN are able to fully take part in the life of our school
- 9) To involve parents and carers at every stage of planning in meeting their child's additional needs.
- 10) To involve, where possible, the children themselves in any decisions, which may affect them, thus ensuring a clear 'Pupil Voice'.
- 11) To provide an inclusive environment for every child, aiming for a high level of independence as and where possible.



## Co-ordination of SEN Provision

At St. Agnes we are aware that in order to ensure quality provision for children with additional needs a full time member of staff is required to undertake the co-ordination of SEN provision. The SEN Team include Louise Wilcox and the Headteacher. The team are responsible for:

| Headteacher  | Louise Wilcox<br><a href="mailto:lwilcox10.211@lgflmail.org">lwilcox10.211@lgflmail.org</a>  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the day to day operation of the school's SEN policy</li><li>co-ordinating provision for children with SEN</li><li>liaising with and advising other members of staff – to include the writing up of individual and whole class provision maps</li><li>supporting the process of early identification through staff observation</li><li>co-ordinating additional provision within the school e.g. support and therapy groups</li><li>liaising with parents and carers</li><li>contributing to in-service training</li><li>liaising with external agencies and the LEA</li><li>Deputy Head to line managing SEN Support staff</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>liaising with the head teacher and governing body</li><li>supporting the process of early identification through staff observation</li><li>overseeing the provision of all children with SEN</li><li>liaising with parents and carers</li><li>liaising with external agencies and the LEA<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Applying for EHC Plans</li></ul></li><li>Organising and running Annual Review meetings</li><li>Making referrals and Liaising with external agencies: e.g. Educational Psychologists, Phoenix Outreach, all NHS support services, Speech &amp; Language, Specific Learning Difficulty Teams, CAMHS, Behaviour Support, Early Help, Local Authority Specialist Inclusion Teachers.</li><li>Class room Provision Map co-ordination</li></ul> |

## Allocation of Resources

At St. Agnes school the local education authority funds our SEN support. Each year we map our provision in order to show how we allocate resources to each year group and calculate the cost of the whole of our SEN requirements. In addition, we receive funding for children who have Educational Health Care Plans. The money we receive is used to meet the need of these pupils and enables us to employ much needed support from an independent speech therapist as well as our special support staff (SSAs). There is a strong evidence base to suggest that full time one to one support is detrimental to a child's growing independence and can undermine their social connections with peers and for these reasons, we try to meet needs using adult support only where it is necessary for the child's continued development. SSAs will not be allocated to one child on a permanent basis and careful consideration will be given to factors such as the adult's expertise or the child's emotional needs when we allocate adults to support children with SEND.



## Identification, Assessment and Monitoring Procedures

At St. Agnes our highly qualified members of staff undertake continuing observation and termly assessment in order to respond to the changing needs of their pupils and to identify possible difficulties in learning. We are very aware of the importance of early identification and have developed the following practices and procedures in order that the needs of SEN pupils are quickly met.

- 1) Staff will undertake regular observations over an appropriate period of time. These will record concerns and be used in discussion with parents/carers or outside agencies.
- 2) A member of the SEN Team will meet with all class teachers every term in order to discuss concerns and to review provision maps.
- 3) SSA's will create provision maps for their individual children to record learning and provide information for parents and staff. This will be with the support of the class teacher and/or SEN Team and any other professionals with knowledge of the child, such as the school speech therapist.
- 4) Regular feedback at staff meetings is given in order to update staff on new developments across the school and wider community.
- 5) Assessment results and individual progress will both be carefully monitored against the National strategies for literacy and numeracy.
- 6) Where a child is identified as having a special educational need, the class teacher will provide (within reason) interventions that are additional to and different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum.
- 7) Children with EHC Plans will be invited to the annual review of their plan alongside their parents and all other relevant adults who have been working as part of their support team. During these meetings, progress and continuing concerns will be discussed and documented and new strategies and new targets will be set.

## SEN Support Register

Once a child has been identified as having a 'special educational need', the school will then decide how to best meet their individual requirements in consultation with the parents. The register simply highlights which children the SENCo should have on their radar for monitoring and support, it is not shared with the Borough and is not permanently recorded on a child's school records. Where a child is deemed to be making inadequate progress, the class teacher will need to provide interventions that are additional to and different from those provided as part of the school's usual differentiated curriculum. These interventions will be carefully monitored and children who benefit from them will be taken off of the SEN support register as progress is made.

Additionally, in liaison with the parent/carer and the SEN Team, the class teacher will consider whether it may be appropriate to provide specialised learning equipment, group or individual support or to devote extra adult time in devising a more planned process of intervention. This latter process may be undertaken by an external



agency such as the school's educational psychologist or school speech therapist. In these circumstances, a child may appear on the SEN support register when they...

- a) make little or no progress over a period of time
- b) continue to have difficulties in their literacy and/or numeracy skills
- c) continue to work at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of their peers
- d) have emotional or behavioural difficulties which regularly and substantially interfere with their own or others learning
- e) have a sensory or physical need which requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice/visits from a specialist service
- f) have ongoing communication or interaction difficulties which impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning

***NB: Children who no longer require additional support, due to significant improvement in their level of need, will be removed from the register as soon as possible***

When children are placed upon the SEN support register, they are classified under the 4 types of SEN need, as indicated by the New SEN Code of Practice (September 2015). These are 'Communication and Interaction' (CI), 'Cognition and Learning' (CL), 'Social, Mental and Emotional Health' (SMEH) and 'Sensory and/or Physical' (SP). Within these classifications, the register will also pinpoint the specific need of a child, for example, if the child is Autistic (ASD) or has a specific learning difficulty (SpLD). This will allow us to assess school resources, to monitor school intake and to identify our own procedures for identification. Children may have needs under more than one of these categories.

## **Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs)**

If a child continues to demonstrate significant cause for concern, the school (or parent) can request an assessment from the LEA. The LEA requires schools to evidence 3 cycles of assess / plan / do / review which we demonstrate by writing Individual Education Plans for the child's specific needs. We will work alongside the parents to collate and present the strongest case we can make for additional support. We will refer to outside specialists for assessments and reports if this evidence is useful and we will refer to the Educational Psychologist whose contribution is essential for consideration of an ECH Needs Assessment. The completed EHC Needs Assessment is then submitted to the LEA who then decide whether to proceed with an assessment.

If the LEA agree to assess the SEN Panel at LBTH will decide whether to issue an ECH Plan which will outline the provisions that will need to be made for the child in order to begin to meet their needs and will confirm the level of funding available to support the EHCP.

Our school aim will be to fully implement the requirements of the EHC within the space of 8 weeks. The plan will be reviewed annually thereafter to look at the progress of the child. This review meeting will be 'person-centred review', in accordance with the Tower Hamlets model.

As with the SEN Support register, children receiving an EHC plan will be carefully monitored. If it is felt that the child does not require the plan any longer, the LEA will be informed with a request that the EHC be withdrawn. Likewise, if it needs to be updated to reflect the child's changing needs, the LEA will be informed and supplied with an amended EHC plan. In both circumstances, the parent/carer will play the leading role in ceasing or amending the plan.

As provision for pupils with SEN is a matter for the whole school, we are keen to encourage all members of staff to attend courses and in-service training sessions. Staff are kept regularly informed of SEN policy and changes to practice through regular meetings, INSET and reference resources. As part of the school professional development program, all staff members are encouraged to assess their own learning needs and courses are then





suggested in order to develop these. In the yearly performance management meetings, SSAs are asked to reflect upon their current training and potential training needs. It is up to the SEN Team to support their requests where possible. Agency staff or the SEN Team may model possible new techniques or programs to support SSAs with particular students or groups. We also encourage peer support, particularly from other, more qualified/experienced SSAs. The SEN Team will also source professionals from in or around the school to train staff. For example, the speech therapist may plan for, model and then support staff in a specific language program.

## **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We are committed to keeping parents informed at all levels of the SEN process. Parents must be quickly informed when there are concerns over the additional needs of their child. They need to be aware of any individual targets set and should be given the opportunity to discuss these. We aim to develop good relationships with parents and feel it important to be open and responsive to any expressions of concern that they may have. Parents are invited to all SEN reviews and are also encouraged to speak with class teachers or if more appropriate the school SEN Team immediately when concerns arise. The SENCo welcomes contact from concerned parents.

## **The School Governing Body**

A report on SEN is contained in the head teacher's termly report to school governors. At regular meetings, throughout the year, governors are kept updated on SEN policy and practice in order that they may evaluate the success of what our school is providing. In the governors annual report to parents there is also a statement on special educational needs provisions within the school.

The SEN school Governor is – Irene Barranco

## **External Agency Support and Community Links**

The LEA provides an educational psychology (EP) service and we are allocated a set number of visits, each year, which works out as roughly one day every three weeks. The role of the EP is to:

- a) assess identified children
- b) work with individual children
- c) give advice on intervention to parents and teachers
- d) refer to other support agencies
- e) complete formal assessments for statement procedures

As a school, we have acknowledged the rising concern for children's speech and language development in our area. Therefore, as well as accessing the borough speech and language service, we have chosen to buy in the additional support of an in-house speech therapist. Within the school premises, the therapist is able to offer individual and group programs to those children identified as having speech and language difficulties. In liaison with the SENCo, the therapist provides additional advice to parents, the class teachers and other support agencies. She also contributes to formal assessments for statement procedures and models specific language programs for SSAs.

We currently have a number of children attending our school who are on the Autistic Spectrum or who are awaiting assessment through ASDAS. As such we have developed good community links with the Phoenix Outreach Team. During their frequent visits, the children under their care may receive individual support and their keyworkers may discuss issues of concern. Access to Phoenix school is also available and the children may attend several sessions over the period of one term (per year).



In addition, the school has accessed the services of other key agencies including:

- the Parents' Advice Centre
- the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Assessment Team
- the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- the school nurse
- Occupational Therapy
- the Behavioural Support Team
- the Sensory Impairment Unit
- the Specific Learning Difficulties Team
- the Language and Communication Team
- the Speech and Language Therapy Team
- the Hearing Impaired Unit
- Early Years parenting support
- Borough Inclusion Teacher for Complex Medical Needs
- Borough Inclusion Teacher for Assistive Technologies
- The Outreach Team at Stephen Hawking Special School
- NHS Occupational Therapy Services
- Tower Hamlets Education Welfare Service (THEWS)
- Independent Play Therapist

## **Administration Arrangements**

Upon acceptance to our school, all parents are asked whether their child has any medical or educational needs. This enables the school, where possible, to make suitable provision for or make contact with any external agencies who may be able to support the child as they begin their schooling with us. It is hoped that this will ensure as smooth a transition as possible.

New children in the Foundation Stage receive a home visit before coming to our school. This enables parents and carers to disclose any concerns for their children's needs in a safe and secure environment. Staff are also encouraged to interact with the children on the home visits to make an early observation of possible need or difficulty.

## **Complaints Procedures**

The SEN Team are happy for parents/carers to approach them with their concerns. In line with the governor's policies on curriculum and pastoral welfare of pupils, complaints should be directed in writing to the chair of governors, who can be contacted via the school.

A copy of the complaints policy is available on the school website – [www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk](http://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk)

## **Further Documentation**

Further information may be obtained from our:

- 'Accessibility Plan' [https://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk/uploads/9/5/1/7/95178630/school\\_accessibility\\_plan\\_2019\\_.pdf](https://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk/uploads/9/5/1/7/95178630/school_accessibility_plan_2019_.pdf)
- SEN Report which includes Tower Hamlet's local offer <https://www.localoffertowerhamlets.co.uk/pages/local-offer/send/send-resources>





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- St Agnes Equality Policy [https://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk/uploads/9/5/1/7/95178630/st\\_agnes\\_equality\\_policy\\_v2\\_2018.pdf](https://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk/uploads/9/5/1/7/95178630/st_agnes_equality_policy_v2_2018.pdf)
- School website – [www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk](http://www.st-agnes.towerhamlets.sch.uk)