Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership
'Academies in Christ'
Part of the Archdiocese of Southwark

Knowledge-rich, skills-led learning for all
Christ at our heart
Serving everyone in our community
Partnership of love, ambition, joy and peace

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy

Model policy template			
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This SEND policy sets out our approach to SEND across the Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership ("the Trust"). To find out exactly how this policy is implemented in each of our schools, see the SEN information report on the each Trust school's website.

1. Aims and objectives

Our special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) policy aims to:

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

2. Vision and values

All pupils will:

- Experience a sense of belonging, be respected and be valued in our schools which all have Catholic Life and Catholic Social Teaching at their heart. This will allow all children to flourish and be enabled to fulfil their potential
- Be educated in schools where their safeguarding, welfare, wellbeing and Catholic education are our first priorities
- Have access to a broad, balanced and varied curriculum, differentiated to meet individual needs
- Be provided with a range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities
- Be supported to make appropriate and ambitious choices for the next stage of their education
- Be afforded the right to fulfil their potential and make the most of their gifts and talents.

Pupils with SEND will:

- Consistently experience Quality First Teaching in the classroom, with provision for them informed by the KCC or Medway Mainstream Core Standards
- Receive appropriate levels of support to allow them to flourish and make progress

- Be involved in the decision-making and planning of their education, appropriate to their age and ability.

Parents of pupils with SEND will:

- Receive timely support and advice about their child's education, welfare and next steps
- Be provided with information about their child's progress, curriculum and provision and have opportunities to regularly review this with the school.

3. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the statutory Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice, Keeping Children Safe in Education and working together to improve school attendance.

This policy is also based on the following legislation:

- Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which sets out schools' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014, which set out local authorities' and schools' responsibilities for education, health and care (EHC) plans, SEN co-ordinators (SENCOs) and the special educational needs (SEN) information report
- The Equality Act 2010 (section 20), which sets out schools' duties to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), which set out schools' responsibilities to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes those with a disability) and those who don't share it
- The Academy Trust Governance Guide which sets out Trust Directors' responsibilities for pupils with SEND
- The School Admissions Code, which sets out schools' obligation to admit all pupils whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names the school, and their duty not to disadvantage unfairly children with a disability or with special education needs
- The Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement guidance sets out the schools' obligations to ensure the school is considering their statutory obligations in relation to pupils with SEND when considering suspension or exclusion.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Inclusion and equal opportunities

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

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

5. Definitions

5.1 Special educational needs

A pupil has SEN 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 of a kind 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 or young people 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.

All schools in our trust will make **reasonable adjustments** for pupils with disabilities, so that they are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with their peers.

5.3 Reasonable adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are changes that schools must make if a pupil's physical or mental disability puts them at a disadvantage compared with others who aren't disabled. This is separate to requirements related to physical changes that make a building accessible, such as disabled toilets. It means schools have a legal obligation under the Equality Act to support pupils who are disabled with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what the school offers in the same way as a pupil who isn't disabled.

5.4 The 4 areas of need

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

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

AREA OF NEED	
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 do not understand or use the social rules of communication. Pupils who are on the autism spectrum often have needs that fall in this category.
Cognition and learning	Pupils with learning difficulties usually learn at a slower pace than their peers. A wide range of needs are grouped in this area, including: • Specific learning difficulties, which impact 1 or more specific aspects of learning, such as: dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia • Moderate learning difficulties • Severe learning difficulties • Profound and multiple learning difficulties, which is where pupils are likely to have severe and complex learning difficulties as well as a physical disability or sensory impairment

AREA OF NEED	
Social, emotional and mental health	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, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder • Suffered adverse childhood experiences These needs can manifest in many ways, for example 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. Pupils may have: • A sensory impairment such as vision impairment, hearing impairment or multi-sensory impairment • A physical impairment These pupils may need ongoing additional support and equipment to access all the opportunities available to their peers.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The SENCO

The SENCO is Colin Frost (senco@our-lady-hartley.kcsp.org.uk)

The SENCO of each school in the trust will:

- Inform any parents that their child may have SEN and then liaise with them about the pupil's needs and any provision made
- Work with the headteacher and SEND local governance committee lead member to determine the strategic development of the SEND information report and provision in the school
- Have day-to-day responsibility for the operation of this SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision made to support individual pupils with SEND, including those who have EHC plans
- Provide professional guidance to colleagues and liaise and work with staff, parents, and other agencies to make sure that pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and high-quality teaching
- Advise on the graduated approach to providing SEND support and differentiated teaching methods appropriate for individual pupils
- Advise on the deployment of the school's delegated budget and other resources to meet pupils' needs effectively
- Be the point of contact for external agencies, especially the local authority (LA) and its support services, and work with external agencies to ensure that appropriate provision is provided
- Liaise with potential next providers of education to make sure that the pupil and their parents are informed about options and that a smooth transition is planned

- When a pupil moves to a different school or institution: Make sure that all relevant information about a pupil's SEND and the provision for them are sent to the appropriate authority, school or institution, in a timely manner
- Work with the headteacher to make sure that the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Make sure the school keeps its records of all pupils with SEND up to date and accurate
- With the headteacher, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEND, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development
- With the headteacher, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- Prepare and review information for inclusion in the school's SEN information report and any updates to this policy
- With the headteacher and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- In our secondary schools, make sure that all pupils, including those with SEND, from year 8 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice
- Work with the SENCO and SEND governance committee member to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision within the school
- Work with the SENCO and SEND governance committee member to make sure the school meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 with regard to reasonable adjustments and access arrangements
- Have overall responsibility for, and awareness of, the provision for pupils with SEND in their school, and their progress
- Ensure that parents are informed when their child's school is making special educational provision for the child
- Make sure that pupils with SEND engage in the activities of the school alongside pupils who don't have SEND
- Ensure that parents are provided with an annual report on their child's progress
- Provide access to a broad and balanced curriculum
- Have a clear approach to identifying and responding to SEND
- Have responsibility for monitoring the school's notional SEND budget and any additional funding allocated by the LA to support individual pupils
- Make sure that the SENCO has enough time to carry out their duties
- Have an overview of the needs of the current cohort of pupils on the SEND register
- Advise the LA when a pupil needs an EHC needs assessment, or when an EHC plan needs an early review
- With the SENCO, monitor to identify any staff who have specific training needs regarding SEN, and incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development

- With the SENCO, regularly review and evaluate the breadth and impact of the SEND support the school offers or can access, and co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and in developing the local offer
- With the SENCO and teaching staff, identify any patterns in the school's identification of SEN, both within the school and in comparison with national data, and use these to reflect on and reinforce the quality of teaching

6.3 The SEND local governance committee

The SEN local governance committee member will:

- Help to raise awareness of SEND issues at local governance committee meetings
- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of SEND provision within their school and update the local governance committee on this
- Work with the Headteacher and SENCO to determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision in their school

6.4 Class teachers

Each class teacher is responsible for:

- Planning and providing high-quality teaching that is differentiated to meet pupil needs through a graduated approach
- The progress and development of every pupil in their class
- Working closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions, and consider how they can be linked to classroom teaching
- Working with the SENCO to review each pupil's progress and development, and decide on any changes to provision
- Ensuring they follow this SEND policy and the SEN information report
- Communicating with parents regularly to:
    - Set clear outcomes and review progress towards them
    - Discuss the activities and support that will help achieve the set outcomes
    - Identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school
    - Listen to the parents' concerns and agree their aspirations for the pupil

6.5 Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants will:

- Supervise pupils with SEND, ensuring their safety and ability to access learning activities and understand the information presented
- Aid the execution of provision plans and interventions suitable to each pupils' learning objectives
- Build a trusting relationship with all pupils and communicate according to their understanding.
- Promote inclusion and acceptance, support diversity and ensure pupils have equal access to learning and development
- Promote class interaction and ensure pupils engage throughout the lessons
- Provide opportunities for developing independence
- Assist pupils with practical activities using a variety of teaching aids
- Under the guidance of teaching staff, provide feedback to pupils, parents and carers about their progress, achievements and any problems that may have arisen.

6.6 CEO and Executive Directors

The CEO and Executive Directors will:

- Co-operate with the LA in reviewing the provision that is available locally and developing the local offer
- Do all it can to make sure that every pupil with SEND gets the support they need
- Make sure that arrangements are in place in schools to support any pupils with medical conditions
- Make sure that information is published each school's website about how the schools are implementing their SEND policy, in a SEN information report
- Make sure that information is published on each school's website about the arrangements for the admission of disabled children, the steps taken to prevent disabled children being treated less favourably than others, the facilities provided to assist access of disabled children, and the schools' accessibility plans
- Make sure that there is a qualified teacher designated as SENCO for each school and that the key responsibilities of the role are set out, and monitor the effectiveness of how these are carried out
- In our secondary schools, make sure that all pupils from year 8 until year 13 are provided with independent careers advice

6.7 The SEND Director

The trust's SEND Director is Jane Holmes (jholmes@kcsp.org.uk).

The SEND Director will:

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

6.8 Trust Board of Directors

The Trust Board of Directors will:

- Monitor the quality and effectiveness of central support for SEND provision across Trust schools
- Monitor the effectiveness of SEND provision within each school
- Determine the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision across all schools in the Trust.

6.9 Parents or carers

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

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

- Invited to termly meetings to review the provision that is in place for their child
- Asked to provide information about the impact of SEN support outside school and any changes in the pupil's needs
- Given the opportunity to share their concerns and, with school staff, agree their aspirations for the pupil
- Given an annual report on the pupil's progress

The school will take into account the views of the parent or carer in any decisions made about the pupil.

6.10 The pupil

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

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

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

7. SEN information report

Every school in the Trust publishes an SEN information report on its website, which sets out how this policy is implemented in the school.

The information report will be updated annually and as soon as possible after any changes to the information it contains.

8. Our approach to SEND support

8.1 Identifying pupils with SEND and assessing their needs

Our school is dedicated to identifying pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as early as possible, understanding how crucial this is for their development. Early identification allows us to provide the right support to help our students succeed academically and socially.

When a pupil starts at our school, we assess their existing skills and achievements, drawing on information from their previous schools and key stages where relevant. We also look for any signs that a pupil may have a disability, so we can determine what adjustments need to be made to support their learning.

Class teachers regularly check the progress of all pupils and look out for those whose progress is much slower than that of their classmates, those who do not improve at expected rates, or those whose achievement gaps widen. This assessment includes not just academic performance but also overall development and social skills.

If a teacher notices that a pupil is struggling in a particular area, they will provide focused, high-quality teaching tailored to that individual's needs. If there is no improvement, the matter will be discussed with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) to consider whether the pupil might have a special educational need. With parental or carer consent, we may also seek advice from external specialists.

It is important to understand that slow progress or low achievement does not automatically mean a pupil is classified as having SEND. We also consider temporary issues that may affect a pupil's behaviour or performance, such as bullying or bereavement, and pay special attention to pupils whose first language is not English.

When deciding whether a pupil needs extra support, school staff will focus on their desired outcomes, including expected progress and achievement, and take into account the views of the pupil and their parents. If a pupil joins us with an existing SEND identification from a previous school, an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), or known involvement from external agencies, we work collaboratively to gather relevant information before the pupil starts, ensuring suitable support is provided right from the beginning.

8.2 Consulting and involving pupils and parents

Our school will put the pupil and their parents at the heart of all decisions made about special educational provision.

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

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

Notes of these early discussions will be added to the pupil's record and given to their parents.

We will formally notify parents when it is decided that a pupil will receive special educational provision.

8.3 The graduated approach to SEN support

Once a pupil has been identified as having SEN, we will take action to remove any barriers to learning, and put effective special educational provision in place. This support will be delivered through successive rounds of a 4-part cycle known as the graduated approach.

1. **Assess**

The pupil's class teacher and the SENCO will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. The views of the pupil and their parents will be taken into account. The school may also seek advice from external support services.

The assessment will be reviewed regularly to help make sure that the support in place is matched to the pupil's need. For many pupils, the most reliable way to identify needs is to observe the way they respond to an intervention.

2. **Plan**

In consultation with the parents and the pupil, the teacher and the SENCO will decide which adjustments, interventions and support will be put into place, the expected outcomes, and a clear date for review.

All staff who work with the pupil will be made aware of the pupil's needs, the outcomes sought, the support provided and any teaching strategies or approaches that are needed. This information will be recorded on Edukey (and where appropriate, SIMS), and will be made accessible to staff in the form of an individual education plan, a pupil passport or as part of a provision map.

Parents will be fully aware of the planned support and interventions, and may be asked to reinforce or contribute to progress at home.

3. **Do**

The pupil's class or subject teacher retains overall responsibility for their progress.

Where the plan involves group or 1-to-1 teaching away from the main class or subject teacher, they still retain responsibility for the pupil. They will work closely with any teaching assistants or specialist staff involved, to plan and assess the impact of support and interventions and how they can be linked to classroom teaching**.**

The SENCO will support the teacher in further assessing the pupil's particular strengths and weaknesses, in problem solving and advising on how to implement support effectively.

4. **Review**

The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress will be reviewed in line with the agreed date.

We will evaluate the impact and quality of the support and interventions. This evaluation will be based on:

- The views of the parents and pupils
- The level of progress the pupil has made towards their outcomes
- The views of teaching staff who work with the pupil

The teacher and the SENCO will revise the outcomes and support in light of the pupil's progress and development, and in consultation with the pupil and their parents.

8.4 Levels of support

School-based SEN support

Pupils receiving SEN support will be placed on the SEND register. These pupils have needs that can be met by the school through the graduated approach. Where the pupil's needs cannot be adequately met with in-house expertise, staff will consider involving an external specialist as soon as possible.

The provision for these pupils is funded through the school's notional SEND budget.

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code K.

Education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils who need more support than is available through the school's school-based SEN provision may be entitled to an EHC plan. The plan is a legal document that describes the needs of the pupil, the provision that will be put in place, and the outcomes sought.

The provision for these pupils will be funded from the school's notional SEND budget, and potentially from the LA (from the high-level needs funding block of the dedicated schools grant).

On the census these pupils will be marked with the code E.

8.5 Evaluating the effectiveness of SEN provision

We evaluate the effectiveness of provision for pupils with SEN by:

- Tracking pupils' progress, including by using provision maps
- Carrying out the review stage of the graduated approach in every cycle of SEN support
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Holding annual reviews for pupils with EHC plans
- Getting feedback from the pupil and their parents

9. Attendance

Many pupils with SEND face complex barriers to attendance. Their right to an education is the same as any other pupil and therefore the attendance ambition for these pupils is the same as it is for any other pupil. However, they may need additional support.

Our approach to supporting pupils who are absent from school due to their SEND is set out in the attendance policy.

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 in this group.

For more details of the pastoral support we offer pupils with SEND, and the support we provide to help pupils overcome any communication barriers they face, see the child protection and safeguarding policy.

11. Expertise and training of staff

Training will regularly be provided to teaching and support staff. The Senior Leadership team and the SENCO will continuously monitor to identify any staff in their school who have specific training needs and will incorporate this into the school's plan for continuous professional development.

12. Links with external professional agencies

The Trust recognises that we won't be able to meet all the needs of every pupil. Whenever necessary our schools will work with external support services such as:

- Specialist teachers or support services
- Educational psychologists
- Occupational therapists, speech and language therapists or physiotherapists
- General practitioners or paediatricians
- School nurses
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services

13. Admission and accessibility arrangements

13.1 Admission arrangements

The admission of pupils with an EHC Plan is dealt with by a completely separate procedure which is integral to the making and maintaining of EHC plans by the pupil's home local authority. Details of this separate procedure are set out in the SEN Code of Practice. All children whose education, health and care (EHC) plan names one of the schools will be admitted before any other places are allocated.

13.2 Accessibility arrangements

At Our Lady of Hartley, we are dedicated to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of their abilities, are treated equally and fairly. We have established several accessibility arrangements to prevent disabled pupils from facing any disadvantages in school.

To improve access to the school's physical environment, we have made important upgrades, including adding specially designed facilities to meet the needs of disabled pupils. We clearly mark changes in levels, such as steps and curbs, to help all pupils move around safely.

We also aim to improve access to the curriculum by adjusting our teaching approaches to support all learners. This includes providing helpful aids and equipment to create an inclusive learning environment. All pupils are encouraged to participate in after-school clubs, leisure and cultural activities, and educational visits, except in cases where safety may be at risk.

We understand the importance of clear communication and strive to improve how we deliver information to everyone, including pupils, staff, parents, and visitors with disabilities.

Through regular reviews and Continuous Professional Development (CPD), our staff continually improve their skills to provide excellent teaching and learning for every child. We firmly believe that every pupil should have the chance to take part fully in the life of Our Lady of Hartley, creating an inclusive and welcoming school community.

The Our Lady of Hartley School's Accessibility Plan can be found in the policy section of our website (https://www.ourladyhartley.kent.sch.uk/policies/)

14. Complaints about SEND provision

Where parents have concerns about our school's SEND provision, they should first raise their concerns informally with the SENCO. We will try to resolve the complaint informally in the first instance. If this does not resolve their concerns, parents are welcome to submit their complaint formally.

Formal complaints about SEND provision in our school should be made to the Headteacher in the first instance. They will be handled in line with the Trust's complaints policy.

If the parent or carer is not satisfied with the school's response, they can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEN Code of Practice.

More information about disagreement resolution and mediation services in the Kent Local Authority area can be found here, and for the Medway Local Authority area here.

15. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

15.1 Evaluating the effectiveness of the policy

We are constantly looking for ways to improve our SEND policy. We will do this by evaluating whether or not we are meeting our objectives set out in section 1.

15.2 Monitoring the policy

The model policy will be reviewed by the Trust and each school's Local Governance Committee **every year**. It will also be updated when any new legislation, requirements or changes in procedure occur during the year.

16. Links with other policies and documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies and documents.