

St Colman's Primary School



SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND INCLUSION POLICY

Policy Reviewed on: March 2024

Ratified by Governors: June 2024

Date of Review: September 2026

Signatures



Mission Statement

***'Joined by Faith
Encouraged to Succeed'***

The Mission Statement of our SEN work in St Colman's PS aims to:

'Identify and meet the unique needs of every child'.

Our approach centres on all our pupils regardless of their strengths, needs and areas to develop. Our school wishes to set high standards in behaviour and learning by nurturing and promoting the many capabilities and talents of individual children.

St. Colman's will therefore promote the highest standards of teaching & learning for all our children including those whose needs are *Special* – whether those needs are short or long-term.

In the interests of these children, we will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to provide for their individual needs. Staff will work skilfully with our Special Educational Needs Provision Map to ensure children are given every opportunity to make progress.

In forming this Policy, we refer to the advice and guidelines set out in:

DENI Circular 2017/04 'Safeguarding & Child Protection in Schools: A Guide for Schools.' Updated Sept 2023.

Legislation

-Education NI Order 1996

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1996/274/contents>

-SEND (NI) Act 2016

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nia/2016/8/pdfs/nia_20160008_en.pdf

-SEN and Disability Order (NI) 2005

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/2005/1117/contents>

Publications

-Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs 1998

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/the-code-of-practice.pdf>

-Supplement to the Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs 2005

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/supplement.pdf>

-Equality Commission Northern Ireland (2006) Disability Discrimination Code of practice for schools (SEND0)

-Department of Education NI (2009) Every School a Good School – a Policy for School Improvement. Bangor, DENI

-The draft Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice 2020

Definition of Special Educational Needs

The Code of Practice on the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs is defined as, “A *Learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made.*”

We define “*learning difficulty*” as a child having ***significantly greater difficulty*** in learning than the majority of children of the same age.

“*Special Educational Provision*” (SpEP) means educational provision which is ***different*** from or ***additional*** to whole school educational provision (WEP) made generally for pupils of comparable age.

In St. Colman’s we recognise that the term “SEN” embraces a breadth of learning and developmental difficulties varying in type, duration, need and severity.

We recognise that Special Educational Needs may arise because of:

- Learning difficulties
- Specific Learning difficulties
- Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
- Speech/Language and Communication difficulties
- Medical conditions
- Physical difficulties
- Sensory Impairment (Hearing or visual difficulties)
- Prolonged absences/fragmented education

Definition of Disability

Under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) a person is regarded as having a disability 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***’.

This definition is also used for the purposes of implementing the Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005.

Definition of Inclusion

Inclusion is ensuring access to appropriate education for all children regardless of special educational needs or disability.

The Special Education Provision in St. Colman's is a whole school responsibility. The Principal and the Learning Support Co-ordinator will manage the SEN provision and keep the Governors informed.

The LSCo working closely with the SEN team, has responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this SEN policy and for coordinating SEN provision.

SEN and Medical Categories

The following is the list of the five overarching SEN categories and sub-categories taken from: Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools, Bangor: DENI).

1. Cognition and Learning (CL) – language, literacy, mathematics, numeracy

- a) Dyslexia (DYL) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - language/literacy
- b) Dyscalculia (DYC) or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) - mathematics/numeracy
- c) Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD)
- d) Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
- e) Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)

2. Social, Behavioural, Emotional and Well-being (SBEW)

- a) Social and Behavioural Difficulties (SBD)
- b) Emotional and Well-being Difficulties (EWD)
- c) Severe Challenging Behaviour associated with SLD or PMLD (SCB)

3. Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN)

- a) Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- b) Language Disorder associated with a differentiating/ biomedical condition (LD)

c) Communication and Social Interaction Difficulties (CSID)

4. Sensory (SE)

a) Blind (BD)

b) Partially Sighted (PS)

c) Severe/Profound Hearing Impairment (SPHI)

d) Mild or Moderate Hearing Impairment (MMHI)

e) Multi-sensory Impairment (MSI)

5. Physical Need (PN)

a) Physical (P)

Children with a medical condition will be recorded on the school's medical register. Those who do not require special educational provision will be recorded on the Medical register only and will not be placed on the SEN register.

A pupil with a medical diagnosis or disability may or may not have a SEN but what is key is "does the pupil have a requirement for special educational provision to access the curriculum?"

A pupil can be recorded on both the SEN register and medical register if they have both a medical need and require special educational provision to be made for them.

The following is the list of the key medical diagnoses as commonly identified and agreed by the Department of Health which occur within the school population taken from Department of Education Northern Ireland (2019) Recording SEN and Medical Categories – Guidance for Schools, Bangor: DENI).

- Epilepsy
- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Anaphylaxis
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Dyspraxia/ Development Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
- Developmental Language Disorder (Medical) (DLD)
- Global Developmental Delay
- Down Syndrome
- Complex Healthcare Needs
- Anxiety Disorder (includes social anxiety, phobia, school refusal, obsessive compulsive disorder)
- Depression

- Eating Disorder
- Psychosis
- Other Medical Disorder
- Cerebral Palsy
- Spina Bifida – with Hydrocephalus
- Spina Bifida – without Hydrocephalus
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Acquired Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Other Medical Condition/ Syndrome

Thankfully our school is a modern building. Children with Physical or mobility issues will have equal access to school resources. The school is fully accessible for wheelchair users or those children who require walking frames. We have well equipped provision for those who require personal care.

Aims

In St Colman’s Primary School, we aim to provide the *very best* opportunities for all our pupils.

Where a child has Special Educational Needs, we will:

1. Ensure the SEN and Disability Act and relevant Codes of Practice and guidance are implemented effectively across the school.
2. Provide a high quality, broad, balanced, relevant education as an absolute right for all.
3. Identify children with special education needs as early as possible in conjunction with parents, educational, medical, and social service agencies.
4. Create, monitor and review IEPs/PLPs in conjunction with parents, support agency/EP advice and the children themselves.
5. Include as far as is possible all pupils with SEN into the life and work of the school.
6. Create a caring and supportive environment in which pupils can contribute to the planned provision in relation to their learning needs.
7. Empower and support staff in their efforts to provide for children with special educational needs, by encouraging the use of teaching strategies which are responsive to different learning styles, and which ensure effective learning.

8. To work collaboratively with parents and encourage close cooperation with professionals/agencies to ensure that the maximum, appropriate support is in place for the children with special educational needs.
9. Monitor each child's progress through frequent assessment and reviews of progress so that adaptations to support can be put in place as soon as possible.
10. Use relevant resources to ensure that the educational and physical needs of children are being met.
11. Ensure that all children with special needs feel valued and have a positive self-image in line with the pastoral ethos of our school.
12. Provide a safe, supportive learning and physical environment in which all children can fully participate in the life of the school and take advantage of the opportunities available to them.
13. Ensure equality of opportunity for children with special educational needs and to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against them.
14. Ensure that Special Educational Provision is a whole school responsibility and that individual needs are focused on and supported in the classroom.

Identification of Children with Special Educational Needs

Each class teacher is, on a daily basis, in a position to recognise whether or not a child is having difficulty maintaining the progress in learning expected from him or her. This progress is confirmed by formal testing throughout the year. The school has an assessment calendar which allows us to monitor progress from P1 through to P7. P3 to P7 will undertake standardised assessments annually in May.

From May 2024 school will embark on a new assessment programme which will use CAT4, PTE and PTM data to provide us with a greater wealth of pupil attainment information.

If school is made aware that a child has SEN before they enrol, every effort will be made to liaise with pre-school providers, other support agencies and parents to enable us to ensure the best supports are in place as soon as possible.

Our teachers are fully committed to each child in their care. In monitoring pupil progress our teachers' professional judgement underpins our good work in this area. There is a continuous Teaching & Learning Cycle where staff continue to monitor progress and use learning to improve and direct their practice.

If a teacher has concerns regarding the emotional or physical development or the medical condition of a child, they will respond by discussing these concerns with the child's parents and then following the procedures as laid out for the school.

“It is vitally important that children with SEN are identified as early as possible and that an awareness of their possible difficulties is clearly communicated between all the professionals involved with their development.”

(Code of Practice 1998 paragraph 2.14)

Strategies to identify SEN/disability in school:

- Assessment (screening and diagnostic)
- Data analysis – pupil performance is tracked and monitored.
- Observation by class teacher of pupils’ academic, social and personal development
- Communication with principal/LSCo
- Communication with parents
- Communication with pre-school/previous school

On some occasions it may be appropriate to include information from social workers, health visitors, doctors and therapists.

Considering SAR Request legislation parents can have copies of all information on request. We will safeguard the confidentiality of other children. GDPR legislation dictates that any information can be requested formally, and we have set procedures to allow this. The school holds an active Data/GDPR Policy. PLPs/IEP’s will only be shared with other schools with parental consent – school has EANI proformas to consent.

The role of the class teacher is **vital** to the early identification of children with SEN/disability. The class teacher will begin to gather information when it becomes apparent that a child is performing at a level **well** below that of his/her peers, thus giving cause for concern.

We will inform parents immediately about our concerns and consult with them. The class teacher will present concerns to the SEN Team/Learning Support Coordinator regarding placement on the school’s SEN Register. After discussion and thorough consideration, the child may be put on the SEN Register.

Indicators for identification and assessment of need may include (but not limited to):

- 1 Behavioural, emotional, and social problems – disruptive or withdrawn behaviour which could lead to difficulty within the normal class routine, and which very negatively impact upon the child’s learning.
- 2 Delayed language development – inability to understand instructions, to sequence events, re-tell a story or answer simple questions.
- 3 Difficulties with reading – poor sight vocabulary, poor phonic ability, difficulty with identifying and forming letter shapes.

- 4 A significant discrepancy between chronological age and reading age as indicated by standardised reading/Literacy tests & Accelerated Reading Programme assessments.
- 5 Physical difficulties/Disability - hearing and sight loss, lack of co-ordination and balance, poor hand/eye co-ordination.
- 6 Medical difficulties/Disability - conditions which have an effect on the pupil's ability to fully access the curriculum or which require particular care plans.
- 7 Trends/Concerns becoming apparent from our Tracking/data analysis arrangements.

Use of Data

The school has highly effective procedures in place for tracking children's performance in assessments.

We use both an electronic system via GL Assessment, SIMS and a paper analysis procedure. Beginning May 2024 - school will adopt a new suite of standardised assessments via GL Assessment & Testwise – PTE, PTM, CAT4, NGRT, NGST will be the core assessments undertaken.

School has a formalised calendar of assessment to be used over the school year.

Teachers' observations are essential in identifying those children who may require intervention and support.

Our data is analysed on an ongoing basis by all teaching staff and Cross Curricular Leaders to identify trends, areas of strength/areas for development among their classes. Staff are skilled in analysing data, setting targets for their children, groups of pupils and individual children. We have robust tracking procedures well embedded in school.

We use a triangulation system for our tracking and use of data whereby:

- Issues/Trends/Areas for focus are identified
- Teachers' planning is fluidly tailored to suit the needs of their class or specific groups and individual children
- Teachers' practice reflects the learning from judgements, data and observations

We measure how our SEN children perform against certain benchmarks (including their non-SEN peers) and monitor their performance against their IEP/PLP targets.

School analyses SEN, FSM and other relevant data.

The principal reports pupil performance information in Numeracy & Literacy to the Board of Governors once annually. Our SDP illustrates targets in Numeracy &

Literacy which the Governors feel are achievable and encourage the school to continue to evolve its provision.

The Learning Support Coordinator provides a termly report to the Governors on the children within the school who are on the SEN Register.

Note: Our collection and use of data is in line with GDPR regulations. Data shared with EA is undertaken reflecting on GDPR guidance.

In our school data is used to support the attainment of:

- The individual
- The class
- The Year Group
- The school as a whole

Organisation of School Support

Role of the Board of Governors

The Board of Governors should:

- ensure that all pupils' special education needs are addressed.
- have regard for the Code of Practice.
- have regard for the school's SEN and Inclusion Policy.
- ensure the policy is kept under review.
- Provide motivation to the school to continue to develop its SEN outworking.

Role of the Principal

The principal should:

- manage provision and appropriate staffing for pupils with SEN.
- keep the Board of Governors informed about SEN/Disability issues.
- work in close partnership with the Learning Support Coordinator.
- Where necessary liaise with parents and external agencies.
- Monitor the SEN budget.
- Monitor Pupil Tracking arrangements.

Role of the Learning Support Coordinator

The LSCo should:

- Provide leadership in the area.
- Oversee the planning and provision mapping of the school's SEN outworking.
- Co-ordinate the day-to-day provision of the school's SEN and Inclusion Policy.
- Liaise with and advise/guide colleagues.

- Provide support on forming and implementing PLPs to meet the needs of the children with SEN.
- Co-ordinate provision for children with special education needs.
- Maintain the school's SEN/Disability register and oversee the records of all pupils with special educational needs.
- Monitor Pupil Tracking arrangements.
- Liaise with and support parents of children with special educational needs.
- Contribute to the In-Service training of staff.
- Liaise with external agencies.
- Store pupils' records securely via our electronic system
- Undertake relevant CPD.

Role of Class Teacher

The class teacher should:

- Be aware of the staged approach to special needs as outlined in the Code of Practice, bearing in mind the importance of early diagnosis.
- Understand the school's SEN Policy (with reference to the school's SEN provision map)
- Inform parents of concern as soon as possible and consult with them.
- Be honest and open in dialogue with parents and SEN support bodies.
- Gather information through formal and informal assessment/observation.
- Develop an inclusive classroom.
- Write and review Education plans/PLPs in consultation with LSCo, children, support agency advice and parents.
- Liaise with Learning Support Coordinator/Principal.
- Seek support from colleagues and specialist agencies when it is required.
- Attend INSET, building a knowledge base of SEN strategies.
- Manage with support of the LSCo Stage 1 of the Code of Practice.
- Meet with parents to discuss Record of Concern when it is raised.

Role of the SEN Team

The SEN Team should:

- Provide leadership in the area.
- Disseminate good practice, support & encourage all members of staff.
- Monitor Tracking arrangements.
- Discuss placing/removing children from the SEN Register.
- Contribute to the evolution of the SEN Policy & INSET
- Promote the school's SEN & Inclusion policy.

Role of Classroom Assistant

The support staff are seen as an important part of the inclusion team and are included in the planning process, monitoring and evaluation.

The classroom assistant should:

- Support the child in meeting the targets of the PLP/IEP
- Contribute to the review of the PLP/IEP
- Assist the teacher in the efficient running of the class.
- Assume responsibility for supervising groups of children when required.
- Prepare work and equipment for pupils as required.
- Provide continuity of adult care e.g., supervising play and cloakrooms including hand washing, toileting, etc.
- Work with the Special Needs/Disabled child on one-to-one basis depending on individual needs of the child.
- Assisting staff with Special Needs/Disabled child by attending to personal needs e.g., toileting, etc
- Support the production of written materials, assisting with charts and displays and cataloguing and processing books and resources as required for the special needs/disabled child.
- Maintain behaviour award/reward charts/positive reinforcement systems.
- Seek help from colleagues when required.

Role of the Parent

The parents should:

We recognise that successful education is dependent on the active and positive participation of parents, teachers and pupils. The importance of meaningful, regular and positive communications between teachers and parents can hardly be overstated. Parents will be provided with opportunities to discuss the progress of their children. All parents are encouraged to support their children at home.

Our school holds annual parent teacher meetings as well as information events held regularly throughout the year. Parents are welcome to visit the school by appointment to discuss problems or concerns with their child's teacher, the LSCO or the principal. We regularly use ClassDojo to share parent workshop and support session information.

In addition, parents of our special needs children will be involved in the preparation and review of education plans, and parents of children at stage 3 of the Code of Practice will be invited in to school to share in their child's Annual Review.

In all communications with parents, teachers will strive to be as sensitive as possible to the needs, apprehensions and background circumstances of the parents and pupils.

Our pupils' views

In school, as far as reasonably practicable, we seek and have regard to the child's views about their strengths, difficulties and education, taking into account, their age and

maturity. We seek and listen to their views about how they learn effectively and then focus on the strategies that work for them.

Key decisions for a particular pupil might include:

- contributing to their own assessment, provision, and progress.
- contributing to the review of IEPs/PLP’S, Annual Reviews, and the Transition process; and
- involving and supporting the pupils to participate in making decisions about matters affecting them.

Seeking our children’s views and supporting them to participate in making decisions about their learning is proven good practice. The child’s progress will be more effective when both they and, where appropriate, their parents are involved, and account is taken of their wishes, feelings, and perspectives.

Use of ICT

We aim to make maximum use of ICT to enhance the teaching & learning experiences fall all the children in our care. Effective ICT is best used across the curriculum.

In class, children have access to computers via our C.O.W. (Classroom on Wheels) and an Interactive BenQ Whiteboard while I pads are timetabled within zone areas. Apps are regularly updated to ensure the latest technology is available to the children. We have access to Sumdog, Lexia & Accelerated Reader/Star Testing to support our work.

Structures

The Code of Practice sets out a three-stage approach which Education Authority (EA), schools and all others should have regard to when identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN.

Responsibility for pupils within Stages 1 & 2 lies at school level (with close involvement of external agencies at Stage 2) and with the EA and school at Stage 3.

Stage 1	Schools delivers SEN provision. Personal Learning Plan (PLP) or IEP required. Applies to the majority of children with SEN
Stage 2	School delivered SEN provision plus external provision (e.g., EA or HSCT) PLP or IEP required. A smaller number of children will access this provision
Stage 3	Formal Statement of SEN Both school & EA delivery of SEN provision and, as appropriate, any relevant treatment or service identified by health. PLP or IEP required. A small minority of children will need this provision

Procedures

The Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs states that a child has SEN if he or she has a learning difficulty, which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. It is our aim to identify such children as soon as possible and put in place the necessary provision to maximise the potential for learning.

- Identification is carried out by class teachers through observing formal and informal assessment. A teacher who has concerns about the progress of a child will, after discussion with the child's parents register that concern with the Learning Support Coordinator & the SEN Team. The teacher will then put in place strategies to address the difficulties.
- After an agreed period of time the teacher and LSCo will meet again and discuss whether or not the initial concerns are still present or have changed in any way. At this stage it may be necessary to draw up an Individual Educational Plan (I.E.P) or PLP for that child. This plan is followed for a term and then reviewed. Evidence is collected in relation to the targets set where relevant.
- If after 2 planning periods, the child's needs are not being met the LSCo may request advice or assistance from outside agencies. This will normally take place at a consultation meeting with the Educational Psychologist during which a course of action will be agreed. This may involve further assessment by the Educational Psychologist or other agencies such as the School Medical Service.
- The results of any assessment carried out and proposals for the future will be communicated to the school and if intervention by outside agencies is required this will be managed by the Education Authority.
- Pupils at Stage 3 receive additional help from the EA in accordance with the recommendations published on the statement.
- IEP/PLP timetable as follows;
IEP x3 per year i.e., 1 per term
PLP x2 per year i.e., Sept to Dec, (Jan review) then Feb to May (June review)
- They are stored electronically in a tracked personal and progressive folder for each child as well as a 'hard copy' being filed by the LSCo.
- Stage 3 pupils have an Annual Review where pupil, teachers, parents, LSCo and all other professionals involved with the child are invited to contribute to and/or attend a review meeting to assess the suitability of the statement and to set targets for the following year. This is held before the end of March each year.

- Those P7 children who are at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice have their Annual Reviews in December (2024/25 *Note: This **may** change to P6 Term 3*) to assist their securing of a move to post-primary education. Educational Psychology involvement is only required when a parent requests a change of placement for their child – i.e., moving from Mainstream to a Specialist class provision etc.

At all stages of this process the child's parents will be involved. The class teacher initially, and then the LSCo, will meet with parents to discuss concerns and the measures being put into place to address them. The co-operation and consent of parents is essential throughout this process.

All areas of Special Needs will be addressed by the school. St Colman's school has always been open to accepting pupils with a wide range of physical, medical, sensory, emotional and learning difficulties and will continue to strive to meet the needs of all our pupils.

Special Provision (SPiMS)

Moderate Learning Difficulties

There are two **MLD** classes in the school. Each class has a maximum of 12 pupils and is staffed by a teacher and a full-time classroom assistant. All the children in these classes have statements of Special Educational Needs. On occasions due to the nature of one or more children additional adult support may be in place as provided by CYPS/SARS.

Admissions Policy

The LSCo will liaise with administrative officers of the EA with regard to the number of places available each year. An EA SEN Officer meets with the LSCo to pass on proposed statements for pupils who meet the criteria for a place in a Moderate Learning Difficulty Unit. LSCo and Principal discuss each pupil individually and return the EA's documentation/consultation to say they will or will not be able to meet the needs of that pupil.

Parents of prospective pupils often request a visit to the school before making their final decision. They will meet the LSCo and be able to discuss their child's needs and how a place in St Colman's could meet those needs.

When the names of the new pupils due to transfer in September are confirmed, an Open Morning for parents and pupils is arranged in June and again in late August. Pupils have an opportunity to see their new classroom and meet other pupils from their class. Parents are able to discuss further their child with the LSCo and their child's new teacher and pass on some personal information if and as they wish to do so.

It is the responsibility of the LSCo to ensure that the needs identified in the statements are being met in school. The LSCo will work closely with the teachers involved in the MLD classes to fully integrate the children into the life of the school.

If a need becomes apparent for a change of provision or for additional support the LSCo will initiate referrals to Special Education Support Services, Medical Services, etc.

The LSCo will organise and facilitate all Annual Reviews for the pupils in the MLD Classes. In some cases, the LSCo and Principal will arrange for visits to post primary schools for the parents of Year 7 pupils due to transfer. This may even necessitate a visit to the schools in question with the parents in order to facilitate their choice of school.

Integration

Our integration work is of paramount importance. We are delighted that many strong friendships are apparent between our MLD based and mainstream children.

All children mix socially in the playground prior to school starting. Our pupils mix for Assemblies, Meal Times, School Concerts, Religious Services, Social events, School Trips etc.

In addition to this informal integration all our children who are based within the MLD classes integrate into a mainstream class for planned, timetabled activities.

This integration work is devised to accommodate the social, emotional, linguistic and educational needs that each pupil has. Following assessment of the above needs and following consultation with staff pupils are placed within a mainstream class aligned to their chronological age.

Each year we make as wide a range of subjects/topics as possible available for integration but importantly – those that offer our MLD based children success.

Pupils mainly integrate for subjects where they can access the learning, make progress and share experiences alongside their mainstream peers. These are planned activities. We are delighted that on many occasions some pupils have moved permanently to their mainstream partner class following very successful integration over a period of time.

We also offer reverse integration for some pupils. On occasions those pupils who may benefit from activities or the expertise of our MLD based staff enjoy opportunities to participate in activities which support their development. Example: Sensory physical activities scheduled during the school week.

Transport

Many of our MLD based children are provided with transport by the EA. It is our policy that we monitor transport arrangements to ensure that all children arrive and depart school safely and on time.

Those children who access transport will be supervised into the taxi/bus by assistants to ensure their safety and good behaviour.

It is important to note that St. Colman's has no authority or decision-making ability over the transport of our MLD based children to and from school and this authority lies with the EANI.

Physical Disabilities

Pupils with physical disabilities may have difficulties with safe movement around the school and play areas. They may also have difficulty handling the normal classroom materials and therefore would be unable to complete activities in class.

The teacher and classroom assistant will be guided by medical personnel, therapists, Education Authority advisors and educational psychology on how to adapt the classroom, the curriculum and the environment to enable the pupils to access learning as fully as possible. Physical and practical activities are adapted to ensure that pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Classroom assistants are responsible for meeting the children in the morning and managing their walking aids or wheelchairs throughout the day. They will also manage the children's use of sitting or standing aids in the classroom.

There are disabled toilets available to the pupils. Each child has a Personal Evacuation Plan. The school liaises frequently with Health and Safety officials to ensure that all necessary measures have been put in place.

Staff Development

The LSCo will be responsible for ensuring that all staff have the necessary training and support to discharge their responsibilities towards the children in their care.

Regular reviews of policy and procedures will be carried out with staff.

Training in areas of concern (e.g., Dyslexia) will be made available to all staff.

The assistance or advice of EANI, CYPS etc will be requested in addressing individual or general difficulties.

The assistance and advice of support services for pupils with behavioural, physical, medical, sensory, language difficulties will be sought and acted upon.

Arrangements for Complaints

Should a parent have a complaint it should be first raised with the class teacher. Failing a resolution, a meeting should be sought with the LSCO. If this is unsatisfactory, the principal will be happy to meet any parent to discuss any problem.

DARS (Dispute Avoidance and Resolution Service)

This service came into effect on 1st September 2005 as part of the implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability order (SENDO). Disagreement may arise between a parent/guardian and either a school or the EA in relation to the special educational provision being made for a child or young person. If initial attempts to resolve the disagreements have not been successful it may be appropriate to make a referral to DARS.

The aim of the DARS is to provide within an independent, confidential and informal forum a further opportunity through which such disagreements may be resolved.

Evaluation

The Principal and LSCO will monitor, evaluate and review the Special Educational Needs Policy, procedures and practice of the school. Adjustments will be made to staffing and provision according to need.

The development of our SEN policy & procedures is a core area of focus in our School Development Plan and Actions for Improvement are planned, monitored and reviewed annually. We self-evaluate our work and seek to build upon our good practice.

St Colman's has always been a welcoming school to children with a variety of physical, medical, sensory, emotional and educational needs. It has always promoted the aspirations of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order 2005 and will continue to do so.

We admit all pupils to our school in accordance with the Admissions Procedure of the school. Statemented pupils are admitted in consultation with EANI SEN Service.

For the purposes of this policy, we would like to share the outcome of our most recent inspection (October 2024) which highlighted the following highly effective practice which should be disseminated across the sector:

- *the school's strategic and meticulous approaches to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion; and*
- *the development of a well-connected and responsive curriculum which equips the children for life.*

Further Addition to SEN Policy (October 2025)

Context:

This Appendix should be considered alongside our school's SEN & Inclusion Policy and has been written following guidance and staff training provided by the Education Authority of Northern Ireland.

St. Colman's will always work in partnership with parents and guardians in the best interests of the child, their needs and their welfare.

In meeting this objective there may be times when the school feels that the inclusion of a pupil on the school's SEN Register is not appropriate for the pupil **at the present time**.

Education Authority Northern Ireland (EA) - Definition of SEN

"A Special Educational Need is a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made."

What is a Learning Difficulty? Source: EANI SEN

- A child or young person is considered to have a learning difficulty if they:
 - Have **significantly** greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of their age, and/or
 - Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities generally provided for children of their age in mainstream schools.

What is "Special Educational Provision?" Source: EANI SEN

- Educational provision, which is additional to, or otherwise different from, that made generally for children of the same age in mainstream schools.

What is the Legal Basis? Source: EANI SEN

- The definition is grounded in:
 - The Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1996
 - The Special Educational Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (Policy update July 2025)

What is the Practical Application in Schools? EANI

- Schools use a Graduated Response to identify and support pupils with SEN. If a pupil requires support **beyond** what is typically available, they may be placed on the SEN Register and provided with a Personal Learning Plan (PLP).
- Use of **ipamer** method – identify, plan, action, monitor, evaluate, review.

Why are we not placing a child on the SEN Register at this time?

A. Lack of sufficient evidence

- The child may not be exhibiting indications of difficulty or need in class **at this time** i.e. there is no clear gap between the child's accessing of the curriculum with their age similar peers.
- School must decide if the child is working to their potential or within an agreed range of success – this is decided through effective use of the ipamer model. Only when there is absolute agreement that the child's attainment is significantly different from their potential or that of their peers should a RoFC (Record of Concern) or placement on the Register happen.
- The child **may** be experiencing difficulties, but there isn't enough consistent or documented evidence to meet the threshold for our school's SEN register.
- The school will monitor the child's performance data and measure against CAT tests and other measurements.
- Teacher observations and ongoing assessments might show that the child is progressing within their expected parameters with standard classroom support.
- Behaviours or difficulties as reported by parents that are occurring at home are not seen in school.
- Some medical issues may not always impact on the child's learning success and may not be a barrier to their learning.

B. Child's needs are being met through teacher input

- The school is confident that the child's needs can be met adequately through use of the school's SEN provision map.
- Teacher professional judgement may indicate that the child's needs can be met from within classroom and curricular adaptations or provision.
- The child's needs may be addressed effectively through differentiated teaching, in-class support and using universal strategies without requiring **additional** SEN support.
- If the child responds well to minor adjustments, they may not require formal SEN identification or placement on the SEN Register.

C. Temporary or Contextual Issues

- Difficulties may be due to short-term factors such as illness, bereavement, new school enrolment/placement or family disruption, rather than a long-term learning need.
- School may monitor the child for a period of time before making a formal decision.

D. Awaiting further assessment

- The school may be in the process of gathering more data, conducting observations, or waiting for external assessments (e.g. from an educational psychologist or speech and language therapist, RISENI or other support agencies for example: use of SEND Central).

- Private Diagnosis presented by parents must be ratified/accepted by EA SEN. (As per EANI Policy discussed with the school by Dr. HJ Braiden, Educational Psychologist.)

E. Parental disagreement or delay

- Sometimes parents may not consent to SEN identification or external referrals.
- The school may delay SEN Register placement while working in partnership with families to reach agreement.

F. Misidentification risk

- The school may be cautious about placing a child prematurely, especially if the difficulties could be due to attendance issues, language barriers, cultural differences, or lack of prior schooling.

G. Policy or resource constraints

- In **very rare** cases, our school may be influenced by resource limitations or because of EANI guidance although neither will **ever** override a child's right to appropriate support.
- A child's placement on the SEN Register should be on the basis that they will move through the Stages of the Code of Practice to Stage 3 – if a child's needs can be met from within classroom provision then the school may decide that placement on the SEN Register is not required at the time.
- The school will use its support agencies – EA SEN, Educational Psychologist, SEND Central etc. to support its decision making in the meeting of this policy and all SEN issues.

This Policy like all our school policies is under regular review and will be amended on a scheduled basis or when new guidance is provided by our supporting agencies.

Glossary:

SEN - Special Educational Needs
 EA - Education Authority
 EANI - Education Authority Northern Ireland
 PLP - Personal Learning Plan
 RofC - Record of Concern
 CAT - Cognitive Abilities Test
 SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability