ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

DIOCESE OF LANCASTER

SEND Policy

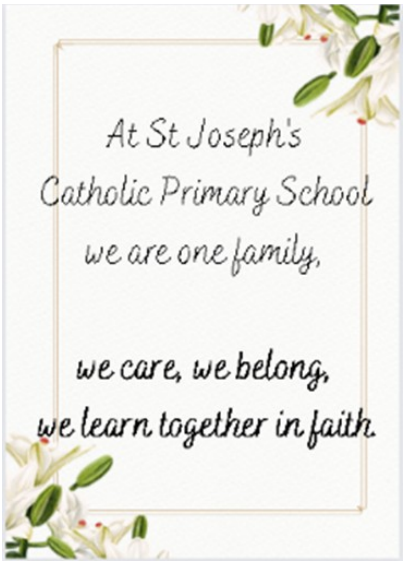
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy 2026–2027

We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

Approved by (Head Teacher)	Annette Savage
Approved by (Chair of Governors)	Alex Farrell
SENCO	Annette Savage (Head Teacher and SENCO)
SEND Link Governor	Laura Rielly
Version	1 – October 2026
Proposed review date	October 2027

Our Vision & Mission

The heart of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School – shared at the start of every school policy



OUR VISION

In the faithful care of St Joseph, Jesus prospered.
We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

OUR MISSION

St Joseph's is a Catholic primary; we are one family. We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.

As a school family we:

- promote the partnership of home, school, church and community;
- pray together, grow in faith and live the Gospel values;
- respect and care for everyone and everything around us;
- value each child as an individual;
- encourage our pupils to develop active and creative minds;
- promote self-esteem and confidence;
- set high standards of learning;
- celebrate the achievements of each and every child.

> *St Joseph's is a Catholic School, in which each individual is valued, cherished and nurtured, as they grow in the knowledge and love of Christ.*

Our vision and values are at the core of everything we do. Our values are rooted in the Gospel and underpin our relationships, teaching and learning, preparing our pupils as confident, happy citizens. In partnership with parents and the community, our purpose is to provide a high standard of education, recognising each person's talents and enabling them to fulfil their true potential.

Our Gospel Values are understood and respected by adults and children alike, as we learn and play alongside one another, showing love, care and forgiveness in all we do. At St Joseph's we focus on the following Gospel Values:

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
Honesty & Forgiveness The Prodigal Son *Luke 15:11–32*	**Respect & Resilience** The Three Wise Men *Matthew 2:1–12*	**Community** Sharing a Meal *Acts 2:46–47*
Thankfulness & Perseverance The Birth of Christ *Luke 2:9–10*	**Generous & Proud** The Good Samaritan *Luke 10:25–37*	**Eloquent & Truthful** Pentecost – The power of the Holy Spirit *Acts 2:1–31*
	Trust Parting of the Red Sea *Exodus 14:21–22*	

Our Mission Statement was written involving all stakeholders in our school – children, parents, staff and governors. It is clearly understood by all, underpinning all we do in school and determining our whole purpose and ethos. We firmly believe that wherever you are in our school you will see our mission statement being lived – in class, in the playground and in our interactions and love of each other.

Document Control

Approved by	Name	Signed	Date
Head Teacher	Annette Savage		
Chair of Governors	Alex Farrell		
SEND Link Governor	Laura Rielly		

Version	Description	Date
1	New SEND Policy written in the St Joseph's policy format. Aligned with the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), the Children and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and the DfE guidance SEN and disabilities: guidance for school governing boards (February 2025). Replaces any previous SEN policy.	October 2026

Proposed review date: October 2027, or sooner if the law, statutory guidance or our arrangements change. The SEN Information Report is updated and republished every year.

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1. Our SEND Mission Statement

> *At St Joseph's, every child is made in the image and likeness of God, and every child belongs. Inspired by St Joseph, who faithfully cared for the child Jesus, we will notice each child's needs early, remove the barriers that hold them back and work hand in hand with families, so that every child with special educational needs or a disability is welcomed, takes part fully in the life of our school family and flourishes in faith, learning and life.*

Our school mission asks us to **value each child as an individual**, to **respect and care for everyone** and to **celebrate the achievements of each and every child**. For children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), this means high expectations, excellent everyday teaching, the right extra help at the right time, and a school community where difference is understood and celebrated.

In Catholic teaching, every person has equal dignity, and we are called to give particular care to those who are most vulnerable. Children with SEND are not an 'add-on' at St Joseph's; they are at the heart of what we are for. "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:13–14).

What inclusion means at St Joseph's

1	**Belonging.** Every child is part of their class, has friends and takes part in school life, including trips, clubs, collective worship, Mass and sacramental preparation.
2	**Participation.** We plan adjustments in advance so that children can join in: a pre-visit before a trip, symbol supports at Mass, a quiet space when needed.
3	**Dignity.** Support is given respectfully and privately. We speak about children in terms of their strengths, not only their difficulties, and personal care is handled sensitively.
4	**Achievement.** Expectations stay high. Children are taught well, make progress from their starting points and become more independent.
5	**Partnership.** Parents, carers and children are listened to and involved in decisions about support.

2. Purpose and Scope of this Policy

This policy sets out how St Joseph's Catholic Primary School identifies, assesses and meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It explains who is responsible for what, how we work with families and other professionals, and how governors make sure the school meets its legal duties.

The policy applies to all pupils, including children in our Reception class, and to all staff, governors and volunteers. It should be read alongside our **SEN Information Report**, which is published on the school website and updated every year. The Information Report gives parents more practical, up-to-date detail about the support available at St Joseph's.

Our school

St Joseph's is a small, Voluntary Aided Catholic primary school in Frizington, in the Diocese of Lancaster, serving Frizington, Cleator Moor and the surrounding villages. We have around 50 pupils, taught in four classes: Reception, Years 1/2, Years 3/4 and Years 5/6. Because we are small, we know every child and every family well.

A much higher proportion of our children have SEND than nationally, and the proportion with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is around twice the national rate. Many families also face financial hardship. SEND therefore affects every class and every decision we make about staffing, teaching and resources. Current figures are given in the SEN Information Report and reported to governors each term.

3. Legislation and Guidance

This policy and our SEN Information Report are based on the following legislation and statutory guidance, which the governing board and staff must have regard to:

- **Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014**, which sets out schools' duties for pupils with SEN and disabilities, including the duty to use 'best endeavours' (section 66), to appoint a SENCO (section 67), to inform parents when special educational provision is made (section 68) and to publish SEN information (section 69).
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014**, which set out schools' responsibilities for EHCPs, SENCOs and the SEN Information Report (regulation 51 and Schedule 1).
- **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015)**.
- **The Equality Act 2010** and the Public Sector Equality Duty, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and to have an Accessibility Plan.
- **Section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014** and the DfE statutory guidance **Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions**.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (current edition) and **Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)**.
- **Working together to improve school attendance** (statutory guidance).
- DfE guidance on **suspension and permanent exclusion**, **behaviour in schools** and **restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force**.
- **The School Admissions Code** and **the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005**.
- **The Teachers' Standards (2011)**, which require every teacher to adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils.
- **UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018**.

It also follows the DfE guidance **Special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities: guidance for school governing boards** (published January 2025, updated February 2025). Appendix A shows how this policy meets that guidance.

Locally, this policy follows Cumberland Council's guidance **SEND Legal Duties and Responsibilities: Mainstream Schools and Academies** (2026) and Cumberland's **Ordinarily Available Provision** document, which sets out the provision expected in all mainstream schools and the bands of intervention used across Cumberland.

> *A note on national SEND reform. In February 2026 the government published a Schools White Paper, Every Child Achieving and Thriving, which proposes major changes to the SEND system. These proposals are not yet law. Until any new legislation comes into force, St Joseph's will continue to follow the current law and the 2015 Code of Practice described in this policy. We will update this policy as soon as the law changes.*

4. Definitions

Special educational needs (SEN)

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for **special educational provision** to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or
- have 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 of the same age (SEND Code of Practice, xiii–xiv). For children under compulsory school age, it means provision of any kind.

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial (more than minor or trivial) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This can include sensory impairments and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy. A child can be disabled without having SEN, can have SEN without being disabled, or can have both.

What is not SEN on its own

In line with the Code of Practice (6.23), the following are not, on their own, special educational needs, although they may affect progress and we will always look carefully for any underlying need:

- a disability that does not need special educational provision, such as a medical condition managed through an Individual Healthcare Plan;
- a medical or clinical diagnosis, for example of autism, ADHD or dyslexia. A diagnosis can help everyone understand a child, but a child is only identified as having SEN if they need special educational provision that is additional to or different from good, adaptive teaching;
- low attendance or punctuality;
- health and welfare needs;
- English as an additional language;
- being in receipt of Pupil Premium funding or being disadvantaged;
- being a looked-after or previously looked-after child;
- being the child of a serviceperson.

Slow progress and low attainment do not automatically mean that a child has SEN. Behaviour is not, on its own, a special educational need: where a child's behaviour causes concern, we look for any underlying difficulty, such as an undiagnosed learning difficulty, a communication need or a mental health need.

5. Aims and Objectives

Our aims for pupils with SEND are that every child will:

- be welcomed, valued and fully included in the life of our Catholic school family;
- receive excellent, adaptive teaching every day from their class teacher;
- have their needs identified as early as possible, and have support put in place without waiting for a diagnosis;

- make good progress from their starting points and become increasingly independent;
- develop confidence, self-esteem and good emotional wellbeing;
- be prepared well for each next stage of their education, and in time for adulthood.

To achieve this, we will:

- follow the graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review set out in the SEND Code of Practice;
- make sure every member of staff understands their responsibility for pupils with SEND: **all teachers are teachers of SEND, all leaders are leaders of SEND and all governors are governors of SEND**;
- work in close partnership with parents and carers, and listen to the views of children;
- work with Cumberland Council, health services and other agencies to secure specialist advice and support;
- make reasonable adjustments so that disabled pupils are not put at a disadvantage;
- use our resources, including our SEN budget, fairly and effectively;
- regularly check the impact of our provision and report honestly to governors and parents.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Provision for pupils with SEND is the responsibility of the whole school community. The main responsibilities are set out below.

The governing board

The governing board as a whole is legally responsible for the school's SEND duties. Working with the Head Teacher, it sets the school's policy and strategy for SEND and makes sure that the school:

- uses its **best endeavours** to make sure that every pupil with SEN gets the support they need;
- has regard to the SEND Code of Practice in all decisions about SEND;
- designates a **qualified teacher or the Head Teacher as SENCO**, makes sure the SENCO gains the mandatory qualification within three years of appointment where required, and gives the SENCO enough time, administrative support and authority to do the role well;
- tells parents when special educational provision is being made for their child;
- prepares and publishes an annual **SEN Information Report**, and keeps this policy under regular review, working with parents and pupils;
- does not discriminate against disabled pupils, makes reasonable adjustments and publishes an **Accessibility Plan**, equality information and equality objectives;
- makes arrangements to support pupils with medical conditions;
- admits a child whose EHCP names the school;
- co-operates with Cumberland Council, including over EHC needs assessments and annual reviews, and with the Cumberland SEND Local Offer;
- is assured that SEND funding is allocated and spent effectively;
- is satisfied with how the school identifies needs, uses the graduated approach, monitors progress and prepares pupils for their next steps;
- regularly reviews how SEND expertise and resources can be used to improve provision across the whole school;
- makes sure the SENCO's key responsibilities are clearly set out, and monitors how effectively they are carried out, using the illustrative SENCO activities in the SEND Code of Practice (paragraphs 6.84–6.94);
- has appropriate, regular training on SEND.

The SEND Link Governor

The governing board appoints a SEND Link Governor, currently **Laura Rielly**, to take a closer interest in SEND on the board's behalf. The SEND Link Governor will:

- champion support for pupils with SEND and help raise awareness of SEND at board meetings;
- meet the Head Teacher and SENCO regularly (at least termly) to understand and question how SEND provision is working;
- visit the school to see provision in action and, where appropriate, hear the views of pupils, parents and staff;
- look at anonymised information about the progress, attendance, behaviour and wellbeing of pupils with SEND;
- make sure the board has the information it needs, and report back to the full governing board;
- work with the Head Teacher and SENCO on the strategic development of this policy and the SEN Information Report.

The SEND Link Governor has a **strategic, not operational** role. They do not assess individual children, decide who is placed on the SEND register, read individual pupil files or become involved in disputes about an individual child. If a parent raises a concern with a governor, the governor will listen kindly and direct them to the class teacher, the SENCO or the Complaints Procedure, so that they remain impartial.

The Head Teacher

At St Joseph's the Head Teacher, **Miss Annette Savage**, is also the SENCO, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children and the Designated Mental Health Lead. As Head Teacher she:

- has overall responsibility for the provision and progress of pupils with SEND;
- works with the SEND Link Governor to set the strategic direction for SEND, and makes sure SEND is reflected in the School Development Plan;
- makes sure that staffing, training and resources are deployed to meet pupils' needs;
- reports to the governing board on SEND, at least termly;
- meets the expectations for additional and special educational needs in the Headteachers' Standards (2020), holding ambitious expectations for every pupil with SEND and making sure the school meets its duties under the SEND Code of Practice.

The SENCO

The SENCO is **Miss Annette Savage**, a qualified teacher and the Head Teacher, who has been SENCO at St Joseph's for more than three years. Miss Savage does not yet hold the mandatory SENCO qualification. Under the SEND Regulations 2014 (regulation 49), a SENCO who is required to hold the qualification must achieve it within three years of taking up the role; the qualification is now the **National Professional Qualification (NPQ) for SENCOs**. Miss Savage has committed to completing the NPQ for SENCOs and will enrol on the next available cohort. The governing board will support her to do this, including releasing time for study, record the start and expected completion dates in the governing board minutes, and check progress each term. In the meantime, Miss Savage seeks advice from experienced, qualified SENCOs when needed, as well as from Cumberland Council's specialist services.

There is **currently no fixed weekly time or dedicated administrative support** for the SENCO role. Because the SENCO is also the Head Teacher and teaches two days a week, we use clear systems (including Learning Plans written by class teachers on Insight) so that SENCO time is spent where it makes the most difference. The governing board will review each year whether the SENCO has enough time, administrative support and resources to carry out the role effectively, as the DfE guidance for governing boards and Cumberland Council's

guidance expect: time for SEND leadership should be planned on a similar basis to other strategic roles in the school.

The SENCO will:

- oversee the day-to-day operation of this policy and co-ordinate provision for pupils with SEND, including those with EHCPs;
- advise and support class teachers on the graduated approach, adaptive teaching and effective interventions;
- decide with class teachers whether a child needs SEN Support, and keep the SEND register and records accurate and up to date;
- check the quality of Learning Plans and make sure they are reviewed on time;
- be the key point of contact for external agencies, especially Cumberland Council services and the NHS, and make referrals with parents' consent;
- organise and chair annual reviews of EHCPs, and request EHC needs assessments where appropriate;
- advise on the use of the school's SEN budget and other resources;
- liaise with early years settings and secondary schools so that transitions are well planned;
- work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead role to make sure the additional safeguarding vulnerabilities of children with SEND are recognised;
- make sure the school meets its duties under the Equality Act 2010 for reasonable adjustments and access arrangements;
- lead and plan SEND training for staff, and keep up to date with changes in law and practice.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of **every** pupil in their class, including where pupils receive support from teaching assistants or specialist staff (Code of Practice 6.36). Class teachers will:

- provide high-quality, adaptive teaching for all pupils;
- spot concerns early and discuss them with parents and the SENCO;
- write, deliver and review Learning Plans on Insight for pupils with SEND, and keep Pupil Passports up to date;
- meet parents at least three times a year to review progress and agree next steps;
- plan and direct the work of teaching assistants, and check the impact of interventions;
- make sure strategies from EHCPs and specialist reports are used in everyday teaching;
- follow this policy.

Teaching assistants and our ELSA

Teaching assistants support pupils under the direction of the class teacher. They deliver planned interventions and in-class support, record progress and share their observations. Wherever possible, they are given time to liaise with class teachers and are invited to contribute to review meetings for the children they support. Our trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) gives short-term support to children who need help with their emotional wellbeing.

Parents and carers

Parents and carers know their child best. We ask them to share their knowledge and concerns, to contribute to and agree Learning Plans, to support learning at home where possible and to attend review meetings. Parents

also have the right to request an EHC needs assessment from Cumberland Council and to seek independent advice from Cumberland SENDIASS.

Pupils

Children are encouraged, in ways that suit their age and understanding, to share what helps them and what they find hard, to help set and review their targets and to take increasing responsibility for their own learning.

7. The Four Broad Areas of Need

The SEND Code of Practice (6.28–6.35) describes four broad areas of need. They help us plan support, but children do not fit neatly into one box: many have needs across more than one area, and we always look at the whole child. We plan support around what a child needs, not around a diagnosis or label: two children with the same diagnosis may need very different support, and a child with a diagnosis may not need special educational provision at all.

Area of need	What it can include	Examples of support at St Joseph's
Communication and interaction	Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN); difficulty understanding or using language; social communication difficulties; autism.	Visual timetables; pre-teaching key vocabulary; short, clear instructions; structured turn-taking; speech and language programmes set by a therapist; warning before changes to routine.
Cognition and learning	Moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties; specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia; working memory difficulties.	Small steps and over-learning; concrete and visual resources in maths; Read Write Inc. keep-up sessions; Literacy Gold; maths fluency groups; word and sound mats; alternative ways of recording.
Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)	Anxiety; low mood; difficulty managing emotions; attachment difficulties; ADHD; the effects of trauma, loss or bereavement.	Predictable routines and warm relationships; a trusted adult to check in with; calm spaces; movement breaks; emotion coaching; ELSA support; sessions with the Howgill Family Centre wellbeing practitioner.
Sensory and/or physical needs	Visual, hearing or multi-sensory impairment; physical disability; fine and gross motor difficulties; sensory processing differences.	Seating near the teacher; enlarged print; ear defenders; pencil grips and writing slopes; fine motor groups; adapted PE; our accessible toilet and shower for personal care.

At St Joseph's our most common needs are currently autism, specific learning difficulties and speech, language and communication needs. We regularly review the needs of our pupils so that staff training and resources match them.

8. Identifying Pupils with SEND

We aim to identify needs **as early as possible**. Concerns may be raised by a teacher, teaching assistant, parent, the child, or another professional such as a health visitor, nursery or speech and language therapist.

How we identify needs

We assess every child's skills and attainment when they join us, building on information from their nursery, previous school and family. Class teachers then check the progress of every pupil regularly, using our assessment information on Insight, Read Write Inc. assessments, NFER tests and observations. Where a child's progress:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers starting from the same baseline;

- fails to match or better their previous rate of progress;
- fails to close the gap between them and their peers; or
- widens the gap,

the class teacher will first look at the quality of teaching and make adjustments, and may put in place a short, targeted intervention. We also look beyond attainment, for example at a child's communication, social skills, wellbeing, attendance, physical development and independence.

If concerns continue, the class teacher and SENCO will talk with the parents and the child, gather more information (for example classroom observation, the Literacy Gold screener or advice from a specialist) and decide together whether the child needs special educational provision.

The monitoring list and the SEND register

Children we are keeping a close eye on, but who do not yet need provision that is additional to or different from good, adaptive teaching, are placed on our **monitoring list**. Children who do need special educational provision are placed on the **SEND register**, at one of two levels:

Level	What it means
SEN Support (K)	The school arranges and funds additional or different support, recorded in a Learning Plan and reviewed through the graduated approach.
Education, Health and Care Plan (E)	Cumberland Council has issued a legal plan describing the child's needs, the outcomes sought and the provision that must be made.

We will always tell parents when we begin making special educational provision for their child, as required by section 68 of the Children and Families Act 2014, and we will discuss and agree the plan with them. When a child no longer needs provision that is additional to or different from good teaching, we will discuss this with parents and the child may be removed from the register, with progress continuing to be monitored.

> *Diagnosis is not the same as need. Support never waits for a diagnosis: NHS assessments, for example for autism or ADHD, can take a long time, so if a child needs help we put it in place now, based on what we can see, and review it. Equally, a diagnosis does not automatically mean a child has SEN or is placed on the SEND register; that decision is based on whether the child needs special educational provision. A child with a diagnosis but no SEN may still be disabled under the Equality Act 2010, and we will make reasonable adjustments for them.*

9. The Graduated Approach: Assess, Plan, Do, Review

When a child is identified as having SEN, we take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective provision in place. This **SEN Support** follows a four-part cycle, known as the graduated approach (Code of Practice 6.44–6.56). Each time round the cycle, we understand the child better and refine the support.

Stage	What happens at St Joseph's	Who is involved
Assess	The class teacher and SENCO bring together assessment information, observations, attendance, the views of the child and parents, and any advice from professionals, to build a clear picture of the child's strengths and needs.	Class teacher, SENCO, parents, child, outside professionals
Plan	We agree clear, SMART targets and the support and strategies that will help the child meet them. These are recorded in a **Learning Plan** on Insight. A one-page **Pupil Passport** tells all adults what helps the child.	Class teacher (leads), SENCO, parents, child

Stage	What happens at St Joseph's	Who is involved
Do	Support and interventions are put in place. The class teacher remains responsible for the child's learning every day, including any time spent with a teaching assistant or away from the class.	Class teacher, teaching assistants, ELSA
Review	Each term the class teacher meets parents (with the SENCO where needed) to review progress and the impact of support, and to agree updated targets. The child's views are included, and the updated plan is shared with parents.	Class teacher, parents, child, SENCO

Learning Plans are reviewed at least **three times a year**. If a child is not making expected progress despite well-matched support, we will seek further advice from specialists (see section 12) and, where needs are significant and complex, consider requesting an EHC needs assessment (see section 13).

10. Working in Partnership with Parents, Carers and Pupils

Parents and carers

At every stage, we keep parents fully informed and involved, and we take account of their wishes, feelings and knowledge. We will:

- talk to parents promptly if we have a concern, and listen carefully when parents raise concerns with us (we usually meet within a week);
- make sure parents understand what support is being put in place, why, and what difference we expect it to make;
- invite parents to termly review meetings and to EHCP annual reviews, and give them a copy of their child's updated Learning Plan;
- ask for parents' consent before referring a child to an outside professional or service;
- signpost parents to the Cumberland SEND Local Offer, Cumberland SENDIASS and other sources of support.

Parents should first speak to their child's class teacher about any concern. They can also ask to meet the SENCO at any time, through the school office.

Pupil voice

We want every child to have a say in decisions about their learning and support. We gather children's views in ways that suit them, for example through conversations, drawings, symbols, 'All about me' pages and their Pupil Passport. Children are invited to take part in their reviews, in an age-appropriate way, and their views are recorded in their Learning Plan and EHCP review.

11. Teaching, Learning and Adaptations

High-quality, adaptive teaching comes first

"High quality teaching, differentiated for individual pupils, is the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN" (Code of Practice 6.37). Extra interventions cannot make up for weak everyday teaching. In all our classes, teachers use the approaches that research (including the Education Endowment Foundation's guidance on SEN in mainstream schools) shows help pupils with SEND and benefit everyone:

- explicit instruction and modelling, breaking learning into small steps;
- scaffolding (prompts, frames and worked examples) that is gradually removed;
- regular checks for understanding and retrieval practice;

- teaching key vocabulary directly, with pictures and actions;
- flexible grouping, rather than fixed 'ability' tables;
- reducing unnecessary demands on working memory, and supporting it with word banks, number lines and written steps;
- communication-friendly, calm and uncluttered classrooms, with visual timetables and labelled resources;
- using technology, such as tablets for recording or text-to-speech, where it helps.

Our mixed-age classes contain many children with additional needs, so careful planning and adaptive teaching are especially important. We use Cumberland Council's **Ordinarily Available Provision** guidance as the benchmark for what every child with SEND can expect from our everyday resources.

Adapting the curriculum and the environment

All pupils, including those with SEND, follow a broad and balanced curriculum, including Religious Education, PE, music and the arts. We adapt how learning is presented, how much support is given and how children can show what they know, while keeping expectations high. Adaptations may include extra processing time, alternative ways of recording, pre-teaching, coloured overlays, ear defenders, adapted equipment and planned movement breaks.

Wherever possible, children with SEND learn alongside their classmates. Where a child does work in a small group or one-to-one outside the classroom, this is for a clear purpose and a limited time, and we make sure the same lessons are not missed repeatedly.

Interventions

Where a child needs more than adaptive teaching, we use well-chosen, time-limited interventions that link closely to classroom learning. Interventions used at St Joseph's include:

Area	Interventions and support we currently offer
Reading, writing and phonics	Read Write Inc. keep-up sessions and one-to-one tutoring; Literacy Gold; fully decodable reading books matched to the child's phonics stage.
Mathematics	Maths fluency groups; concrete and pictorial resources; pre-teaching.
Communication and language	Language groups using programmes and advice from NHS speech and language therapists; visual supports.
Social, emotional and mental health	Short-term ELSA support; sessions with the Howgill Family Centre Social and Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner (in school weekly); trusted-adult check-ins; calm spaces.
Physical and sensory	Fine motor groups; programmes from occupational therapy and physiotherapy; sensory tools and adapted equipment.

The interventions on offer change as the needs of our pupils change. The current list is kept up to date in the SEN Information Report. We measure the impact of each intervention by comparing a child's skills before and after it, and we stop or change interventions that are not working.

Specialist equipment and facilities

Everyday resources that help pupils with SEND, such as visual timetables, pencil grips, writing slopes, ear defenders, coloured overlays and technology for recording, are bought from the school's budget. Specialist equipment recommended for an individual child, for example by an occupational therapist, physiotherapist or the Sensory Impairment Team, is obtained through those services, the NHS or Cumberland Council. Where a child's EHCP specifies equipment or extra support, it is funded through the school's budget and the council's top-

up funding. Larger changes to the building are planned through our Accessibility Plan, with support from Cumberland Council where needed.

Access arrangements

Pupils who meet the criteria may receive access arrangements in statutory assessments, such as the phonics screening check, the multiplication tables check and Key Stage 2 tests. These may include extra time, a reader, a scribe or rest breaks, in line with the Standards and Testing Agency's guidance, and should reflect the child's normal way of working in class.

12. Specialist Expertise and Working with Other Agencies

If a child continues to make less than expected progress despite well-matched support, or their needs are complex, we will seek advice from specialists, **with the parents' consent**. The advice we receive is shared with parents and built into the child's Learning Plan. Services we work with include:

Service	How it can help
Cumberland Educational Psychology Service	Assessment and advice on learning, development and wellbeing; statutory advice for EHC needs assessments.
Cumberland Specialist Teaching services	Advice for autism and social communication, speech and language, and cognition and learning.
Cumberland Sensory Impairment Team	Support for children with vision, hearing or multi-sensory impairment.
NHS services (North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust)	Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, school nursing and paediatrics; the neurodevelopmental pathway.
CAMHS (Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust)	Specialist mental health assessment and support.
Howgill Family Centre	A Social and Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner works in school each week; the school makes referrals.
Cumberland Family Help (Early Help)	Support for families through an Early Help Assessment and Team Around the Family.
Cumberland Virtual School	Support for the education of looked-after and previously looked-after children, including those with SEND.
Cumberland Children's Social Care	Where a child has a social worker, is a Child in Need or is looked after, we work with social care so that education, health and care support fit together. Social care also gives advice for EHC needs assessments and reviews.
Voluntary and community organisations	Charities, parent support groups and local organisations listed on the Cumberland SEND Local Offer, which we signpost families to and work with where helpful.

13. Education, Health and Care Plans

Requesting an EHC needs assessment

Most children's needs are met through SEN Support. Where a child has significant and complex needs and has not made expected progress despite the school taking relevant and purposeful action over time, the school, working with parents, may ask **Cumberland Council** to carry out an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. Parents (and young people over 16) also have the right to request an assessment themselves, and we will support them to do so.

The council must decide whether to carry out an assessment within **6 weeks** of the request. If it agrees to assess, and decides a plan is needed, the final EHCP should be issued within **20 weeks** of the original request. The school contributes advice and evidence, including records of the graduated approach, to the assessment.

When a child has an EHCP

- We must deliver the special educational provision set out in the plan, and we use the plan's outcomes to set shorter-term targets in the child's Learning Plan.
- We hold an **annual review** at least every 12 months (more often for younger children where needed), inviting the parents, the child and the professionals involved. Within **2 weeks** of the meeting, we send a report to the council, which must then tell parents within 4 weeks whether it intends to keep, amend or cease the plan.
- Where a child will move to secondary school, the plan must be reviewed and amended to name the new school by **15 February** of Year 6, so we plan early with families and the council.
- If a child's needs change significantly, we can ask the council for an early (interim) review.

Where an EHCP names St Joseph's, we will admit the child. When the council consults us about naming St Joseph's in a plan, governors and leaders will respond carefully and promptly, in line with the law.

14. Inclusion in the Whole Life of the School

Every child with SEND is entitled to take part in **all** aspects of school life, alongside their peers. We plan reasonable adjustments in advance so that pupils with SEND can join in:

- **Religious Education, collective worship, Mass and sacramental preparation**, for example with visual supports, a familiar adult or a quiet space where needed;
- **school trips and residential visits**, using pre-visits, social stories, adapted risk assessments and discussion with parents;
- **before- and after-school clubs**, sports, performances and celebrations;
- **pupil leadership roles**, class jobs and responsibilities.

No child will be excluded from an activity because of their SEN or disability. If an adjustment is not possible, we will discuss this with parents and look for an alternative that gives the child an equivalent experience.

15. Emotional Wellbeing, Safeguarding and Bullying

Wellbeing

We support the social and emotional development of every child through our Catholic ethos, our Gospel values, our HRSE and PSHE curriculum and warm, consistent relationships. Children who need extra help may receive ELSA support, sessions with our wellbeing practitioner, a trusted adult to check in with, or referral to specialist services. As Designated Mental Health Lead, the Head Teacher oversees our whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Safeguarding

Children with SEND can face additional safeguarding challenges. Staff are trained to recognise that indicators of possible abuse, such as changes in behaviour, mood or injury, must not be assumed to relate to a child's disability without further exploration, and that some children may find it harder to tell us they are worried. Children with SEND may also be more affected by bullying and harassment without outwardly showing signs, and may face extra risks online. Any concern is reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay, in line with our **Child Protection Policy and Procedures**.

Bullying

Bullying of any kind is contrary to the Gospel and will not be tolerated. We teach children about difference, kindness and respect, and we challenge prejudice relating to disability and SEND. Incidents are dealt with under our **Behaviour Policy** and **Equality Policy**, and we pay particular attention to pupils with SEND who may be more vulnerable to bullying or less able to report it.

16. Behaviour, Attendance and Medical Needs

Behaviour

Our school rules are **Be Ready, Be Respectful and Kind, and Be Safe**, and our Behaviour Policy uses a clear stepped approach: Reminder, Warning, White Zone and Red Zone. We expect high standards of behaviour from every child, and we also recognise that a child's SEND may affect their behaviour. In line with our Behaviour Policy, the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice:

- we consider whether a child's SEND has contributed to their behaviour, and whether it is lawful and appropriate to apply a sanction;
- we make reasonable adjustments to routines and to sanctions (for example, missed playtime will not be used where an adjustment is needed because of SEND);
- we use individual behaviour or regulation plans, agreed with parents, for children who need them;
- where a child repeatedly reaches the White or Red Zone, the class teacher alerts the Head Teacher and SENCO so that support can be reviewed and any unmet need identified.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are used only as a last resort. Before any such decision, we consider whether the child's needs are being fully met, whether an EHC needs assessment or an early review of an EHCP is needed, and what additional support could be put in place. Any use of restrictive intervention follows the DfE guidance and our Behaviour Policy.

Attendance

Good attendance is essential for children with SEND to benefit from the support in place. Where a child's SEND or health needs affect their attendance, including emotionally based school avoidance, we work with the family to understand the barriers and agree reasonable adjustments and support, in line with **Working together to improve school attendance** and our Attendance Policy. We monitor the attendance of pupils with SEND closely and report it to governors.

A **part-time timetable** is used only in exceptional circumstances, as a temporary measure to help a child return to full-time education, for example after illness or during a period of crisis. It will only be used with the agreement of parents, will have a clear plan and an agreed end date, will be reviewed regularly (at least every few weeks) and will be reported to Cumberland Council in line with local procedures. A part-time timetable is never used as a sanction or as a long-term way of managing a child's needs. For a child with an EHCP, we will also inform the council's SEND team and consider an early review of the plan.

Pupils with medical conditions

Pupils with medical conditions are supported so that they can play a full part in school life, including trips and PE, in line with our **Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy** and the DfE statutory guidance. Where needed, an **Individual Healthcare Plan** is agreed with parents and health professionals. Where a child also has SEN, their provision is planned and delivered in a co-ordinated way with their healthcare plan, and with their EHCP if they have one.

17. Transition and Moving On

Changes of class or school can be particularly hard for children with SEND, so we plan transitions carefully and early, with parents and the child.

Transition	How we support it
Starting in Reception	We meet families before the child starts, visit or speak to nursery staff, and gather information from health visitors and other professionals. Where a child with SEND is due to join, we work with the council and health professionals so that adjustments are ready before they start.
Moving class within school	Teachers share Learning Plans and Pupil Passports, and children have extra visits, photo books or social stories where these help.
Joining us at other times	We contact the previous school promptly for records and advice, and for a child with an EHCP we plan support with the council before the child starts.
Moving to secondary school	The SENCO liaises with the secondary school's SENCO, shares information with parents' agreement and arranges extra visits where helpful. For pupils with EHCPs, transition is planned through the Year 5 and Year 6 annual reviews.

Preparing for adulthood

The SEND Code of Practice expects schools to help children with SEND prepare for adult life from the earliest years. At primary school, this means helping every child to become as independent as possible: managing personal care, organising their own belongings, making choices, communicating their needs, building friendships, staying healthy and safe (including online), and finding their way in the community. These skills are built into Learning Plan targets, EHCP outcomes and our curriculum, and are discussed at annual reviews, especially from Year 5 onwards as children prepare for secondary school.

When a pupil leaves St Joseph's, we send their educational record, including SEND information, to the new school **within 15 school days**, securely and in line with data protection law.

18. Staff Training and Expertise

All staff need the knowledge and skills to support pupils with SEND. We will:

- include SEND, this policy and our procedures in the induction of every new member of staff, supply teacher and volunteer;
- provide regular whole-staff training linked to the needs of our current pupils, for example autism, speech and language, dyslexia, emotional regulation and adaptive teaching;
- provide specific training for teaching assistants who deliver interventions or support children with EHCPs;
- use the expertise of Cumberland specialist services, the NHS and the Education Endowment Foundation;
- support the SENCO to complete the NPQ for SENCOs, and to keep up to date through local SENCO networks, advice from qualified SENCOs, the Local Offer and national guidance.

Training needs are identified through pupil progress meetings, staff appraisal and monitoring, and are planned as part of the School Development Plan.

19. Funding and Resources

Mainstream schools receive money for SEN support as part of their overall budget. Schools are expected to fund the first part of each pupil's additional support from this **notional SEN budget**. Where a child with an EHCP needs support costing more than this, Cumberland Council provides additional **top-up funding**.

The Head Teacher and SENCO decide how SEND resources, including staffing, are allocated, according to pupils' needs and the evidence of what works. Governors are assured that SEND funding is allocated and spent effectively through regular reports, and they consider SEND whenever they make decisions about the budget and staffing. Pupil Premium funding is separate from SEND funding, although some pupils are eligible for both.

20. Accessibility, Equality and Admissions

Accessibility and equality

St Joseph's building is on one level and accessible to wheelchair users. We have an accessible toilet with a shower for pupils who need personal care. Our **Accessibility Plan** sets out how we will improve access for disabled pupils to the curriculum, the physical environment and written information. It is reviewed at least every three years and published on the school website.

Under the Equality Act 2010 we will not discriminate against disabled pupils, and we will make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services, so that they are not put at a substantial disadvantage. Our **Equality Policy** sets out our equality information and objectives, including how we monitor the experience and outcomes of disabled pupils.

Admissions

Our admissions arrangements do not discriminate against pupils with SEN or disabilities, and admissions are co-ordinated by Cumberland Council. A child with SEN but without an EHCP is considered in exactly the same way as every other applicant. A child whose EHCP names St Joseph's will be admitted.

21. Evaluating the Effectiveness of SEND Provision

We check how well our SEND provision is working by:

- reviewing each child's progress towards their Learning Plan targets every term, and tracking wider progress on Insight;
- comparing before-and-after assessments for interventions;
- holding annual reviews for pupils with EHCPs;
- monitoring the quality of teaching, Learning Plans and provision through learning walks, book looks and discussions with staff;
- looking at the attendance, behaviour and wellbeing of pupils with SEND, and comparing them with other pupils;
- seeking the views of pupils, parents and staff;
- using the visits and questions of the SEND Link Governor.

Because our groups are very small, governors look at patterns over time rather than at single percentages, and information that could identify an individual child is not shared in public reports. The Head Teacher reports to the governing board on SEND at least termly, and the findings inform the School Development Plan and the annual SEN Information Report.

22. Record Keeping and Confidentiality

We keep accurate and up-to-date records of pupils' needs, the provision made and its impact. SEND records are kept securely on Insight and Arbor, and safeguarding information on CPOMS. Information is shared only with those who need it, in line with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018 and our Data Protection Policy. Parents can ask to see their child's records. Records are kept and transferred in line with the law and our records retention schedule.

23. Complaints and Resolving Disagreements

We hope to resolve any concerns quickly and informally. If parents are unhappy with any aspect of their child's SEND support, we encourage them to:

1	**Talk to the class teacher** as soon as possible.
2	**Speak to the SENCO,** Miss Savage, by contacting the school office on 01946 810702 or admin@st-josephsrc.cumbria.sch.uk.
3	**Make a formal complaint** under the school's Complaints Procedure, which is available on the school website. Complaints should be made while the child is registered with us. This includes complaints that the school is not providing the support set out in a child's EHCP.

Parents can get free, impartial advice at any stage from **Cumberland SENDIASS** (sendiass.cumberland.gov.uk; Copeland co-ordinator 07788 360336). Some disagreements are about decisions made by Cumberland Council rather than the school, for example a refusal to carry out an EHC needs assessment, or the content of an EHCP. Parents can appeal these decisions to the **First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability)**, usually after considering mediation. Parents can also make a claim of disability discrimination to the Tribunal.

Other routes that may be open to parents, depending on the issue, include Cumberland Council's **disagreement resolution service**, a complaint to **Ofsted**, a complaint to the **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman** (about the council) and, once the school's complaints procedure has been completed, a complaint to the **Department for Education**.

24. The SEN Information Report and the Local Offer

Every year we publish an **SEN Information Report** on our website, setting out how we put this policy into practice. As required by the SEND Regulations 2014 (Schedule 1), it includes: the kinds of SEN we provide for; how we identify and assess needs; how we consult parents and pupils; how we review progress; how we support transitions; our approach to teaching and adapting the curriculum; staff expertise and training; how we evaluate provision; how pupils with SEND take part in all activities; support for emotional and social development; how we involve other agencies; our complaints arrangements; the name and contact details of the SENCO; and where to find Cumberland Council's Local Offer.

Cumberland Council's **SEND Local Offer** brings together information about education, health and care services for children and young people with SEND in Cumberland. It can be found at **cumberlandsend.co.uk**.

25. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed **every year** by the SENCO and the SEND Link Governor, with the views of parents and pupils, and approved by the governing board. It will be reviewed sooner if the law, statutory guidance or our arrangements change. The Head Teacher reports to the governing board on the implementation of this policy.

How this policy was developed

This policy was written by the SENCO with the SEND Link Governor, drawing on the SEND Code of Practice, the DfE guidance for governing boards, Cumberland Council's SEND Legal Duties and Responsibilities guidance and Ordinarily Available Provision document, and the school's SEND Governor Handbook. All teaching and support staff were consulted on a draft of this policy during the autumn term 2026. Staff were invited to comment on how the policy reflects day-to-day practice in school, including identification, Learning Plans, interventions and the support given to pupils with SEND, and their feedback was taken into account before the policy was presented to the governing board for approval. The governing board approves the policy, and the Chair of Governors signs and dates it in the Document Control section, which also records the next review date.

Links with other policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEN Information Report
- Accessibility Plan
- Equality Statement and Scheme (Equality Policy)
- Behaviour Policy and Procedures, including anti-bullying
- Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Admissions Arrangements
- Complaints Procedure
- Data Protection Policy
- Pupil Premium Strategy

Appendix A: Meeting the DfE Governing Board Guidance

This table shows how this policy meets the governing board responsibilities in the DfE guidance **Special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities: guidance for school governing boards** (2025). It can be used by governors when approving and reviewing the policy.

Governing board responsibility	Where it is met in this policy
Set the school's SEND policy and strategy, with senior leaders, and review it regularly with parents and pupils	Sections 6 and 25
Have regard to the SEND Code of Practice and understand Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010	Sections 3 and 4
Use best endeavours to secure the provision pupils with SEN need	Sections 6, 9, 11 and 19
Designate a qualified teacher or the Head Teacher as SENCO; mandatory qualification within 3 years; enough time, support and authority	Section 6 (The SENCO)
Tell parents when special educational provision is made for their child	Section 8
Ensure a lead governor or committee oversees SEND	Section 6 (The SEND Link Governor)
Receive appropriate and regular SEND training	Sections 6 and 18
Be assured that SEND funding is allocated and spent effectively	Section 19
Be satisfied with identification, the graduated approach and monitoring of progress	Sections 8, 9 and 21
Ensure pupils are prepared for their next steps (preparing for adulthood)	Sections 5 and 17
Prepare and regularly update the SEN Information Report	Section 24
Prepare and regularly update the Accessibility Plan, equality information and equality objectives	Section 20
Work with the local authority on the Local Offer	Sections 12 and 24
Support pupils with medical conditions	Section 16
Admit a child whose EHCP names the school	Sections 13 and 20

Appendix B: Useful Contacts and Glossary

Useful contacts

Who	How to contact
School office	01946 810702 · admin@st-josephsrc.cumbria.sch.uk
Class teacher	Speak to them at the start or end of the day, or via ClassDojo.
SENCO: Miss Annette Savage	Through the school office: 01946 810702 or admin@st-josephsrc.cumbria.sch.uk
SEND Link Governor: Laura Rielly	Through the school office (for general SEND matters, not individual cases).
Cumberland SEND Local Offer	cumberlandsend.co.uk
Cumberland SENDIASS	Free, impartial and confidential advice for parents and carers. Website: sendiass.cumberland.gov.uk. Copeland co-ordinator: 07788 360336.
Urgent concern that a child is at risk of harm	Cumberland Children Advice and Support Service (CCASS): 0333 240 1727

Glossary

Term	Meaning
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
APDR	Assess, Plan, Do, Review: the graduated approach
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan: a legal plan issued by the local authority
ELSA	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
EP	Educational Psychologist
Learning Plan	Our name for an Individual Education Plan: targets, strategies and support for a child with SEND, reviewed each term
Pupil Passport	A one-page profile of a child's strengths and what helps them
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SENDIASS	SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty, such as dyslexia

Every child is made in the image of God, loved and welcomed.

We care, we belong, we learn together in faith.