



St Mary Magdalene Academy

The Courtyard

THE COURTYARD

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

The Courtyard aims to offer an outstanding educational and social provision that will equip our pupils with the skills and experiences needed to discover and live out their potential.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) - POLICY STATEMENT

**ST MARY MAGDALENE ACADEMY
THE COURTYARD**

Approval Committee:	Full Governing Body
Author:	Head Teacher
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Required to publish on website?	Yes
Statutory?	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy accepts the definition of SEN as set out in s20 of the Children and Families act 2014. It reflects the approach to and arrangements for SEN outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014.

2. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL PROVISION AT THE COURTYARD

- 2.1 The Courtyard is a special school for pupils aged 13-19. Pupils at The Courtyard all possess an EHCP for autism spectrum disorder and/or speech, language and communication needs. Many pupils at The Courtyard also have additional difficulties (e.g. physical, sensory, communication and emotional/behavioural).
- 2.2 Admissions to the school are managed by the school in consultation with local authorities. Pupils are accepted throughout the academic year. We implement transition programmes for all pupils prior to placement. Placements at The Courtyard are kept under constant review and specifically through the Annual Review process which monitors a pupil's EHCP. The school accepts pupils from Islington and surrounding boroughs if the placement is felt to be appropriate and places are available (See The Courtyard Admissions Policy).
- 2.3 The Courtyard has been designed and built to have provision and accessibility for people with disabilities so that they may be integrated fully into The Courtyard life (See the Disability and Accessibility Plan/Policy).

3. AIMS

- 3.1 To know each individual pupil as thoroughly as we can, including any circumstances which might affect their well-being, behaviour and performance at any moment in time. This includes taking a long-term view of each pupil, visualising the best possibilities for each, and knowing when they are ready to take the next (challenging) step.
- 3.2 To ensure we always see, first and foremost, the child and not the disability and to ensure that education (and not care) remains paramount. This will include identifying what motivates each child, to be aware of any barriers to learning, and use that knowledge to encourage them to 'have a go' for themselves.
- 3.3 To ensure that pupils feel safe, secure and comfortable to enable them to focus on learning, ensuring staff have clarity and act on policies and procedures.
- 3.4 To maintain high but realistic expectations for each pupil, enabling the development of independence.
- 3.5 To ensure that each pupil has a personalised curriculum which is tailored towards the specific needs of each individual pupil.

- 3.6 To work effectively with St Mary Magdalene Academy to offer a range of academic subjects which our pupils can access with the direct support of The Courtyard staff, this includes work experience placements for sixth form pupils.
- 3.7 To offer opportunities and experiences for pupils to learn in a multitude of different ways and through a rich, varied and individualised curriculum.
- 3.8 To ensure that all pupils are engaged in learning activities appropriate to their abilities.
- 3.9 To encourage pupils to monitor their progress and to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning.
- 3.10 To give pupils an equal voice in, and ownership of, their education so that they are able to express opinions, choices and preferences, promoting their independence, confidence and self-efficacy.
- 3.11 To use individuals' interests, skills and experiences to enhance the education of pupils and staff.
- 3.12 To provide enriching, motivational and project-based work experience opportunities.
- 3.13 To learn and share information, to the benefit of our pupils through mutually supportive relationships with parents, specialists and outside agencies.
- 3.14 To ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place to protect pupils from harm and neglect (please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy for more information).

4. GOVERNOR INVOLVEMENT

The Governors, along with the Headteacher, are responsible for ensuring the aims of the school are achieved. This is realised by:

- 4.1 Governor Involvement in development planning and the monitoring/evaluation of the plan.
- 4.2 Termly Governors' meetings at which school development is always a priority focus.
- 4.3 The detailed work of Governors, e.g., links with teachers, pupil shadowing, participation in school events, Governor training, classroom observations.

5. SCHOOL STAFF

- 5.1 The individual needs of the pupils at The Courtyard require the staff to have an understanding of child and adolescent development and experience and expertise in the following areas:
 - 5.1.1 autistic spectrum condition;
 - 5.1.2 social communication disorder;
 - 5.1.3 challenging behaviour;
 - 5.1.4 working with parents and support professionals;
 - 5.1.5 medical needs;
 - 5.1.6 language development;
 - 5.1.7 sensory sensitivity;
 - 5.1.8 any additional needs that any individual pupil may be experiencing, e.g., physical disability, ADHD.
- 5.2 Professional development opportunities are available to all staff to meet the needs of the pupils. Staff are encouraged to support each other and to share expertise.
- 5.3 The school works with a range of external professionals to best support the pupils to access their education and achieve their potential. Such external professionals include Speech and Language Therapists, CAMHS Clinicians, Educational Psychologists, Art Therapists and Occupational Therapists.
- 5.4 The Deputy Head: SEN/Safeguarding of the Courtyard acts as the SENCO for the school. The Deputy Head is responsible for:
 - 5.4.1 the day-to-day operation of the SEN Policy;
 - 5.4.2 co-ordinating provision for pupils;
 - 5.4.3 liaising with parents/carers of pupils;
 - 5.4.4 liaising with external agencies as required;
 - 5.4.5 staff training;
 - 5.4.6 keeping staff informed of new legislation, policies and procedures;
 - 5.4.7 ensuring staff are informed of pupils' needs;
 - 5.4.8 liaising with other schools regarding the transfer of pupils and to ensure that the relevant records are made available;

- 5.4.9 responsibility for children with Education Health and Care (EHC) plans and their Annual Review;
- 5.4.10 chairing Annual Review meetings;
- 5.4.11 ensuring that relevant paperwork is submitted to Islington Council and shared with selected parties;
- 5.4.12 ensuring that Islington Council are regularly informed of the provision on offer here at the Courtyard through the submission of the School's Information Report;
- 5.4.13 ensuring that parents are aware of the support and provision available in Islington via the Local Offer link on Islington Council's website.

5.5 Teachers are responsible for:

- 5.5.1 ensuring that lessons are structured to meet the needs highlighted in each pupil's Individual Education Plan (Appendix A);
- 5.5.2 referring concerns and/or additional needs to the Deputy Head;
- 5.5.3 monitoring progress against the targets stipulated in each pupil's IEP;
- 5.5.4 Liaising with parents and pupils.

6. PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS/CARERS

- 6.1 The Courtyard recognises the crucial role of involvement offered by parents/carers in supporting their children and will therefore value the opportunity to discuss practical strategies to enhance their child's development, with them.
- 6.2 Parents/Carers are invited to attend Annual EHCP Review Meetings. They will also be able to meet the teaching and support team at Parents/Carers' Evenings.
- 6.3 The Children and Families Act 2014 stipulates that parents/carers/young people can have more of an active role in the provision put in place to support the young person with an EHCP. The Courtyard will support parents/carers with this process, liaising with support agencies and local authorities where necessary.

7. RESOURCES

- 7.1 Staffing levels are significantly higher than in mainstream schools, allowing for small class sizes, direct 1:1 support if necessary, individual timetabling and pastoral support.
- 7.2 All pupils have a detailed Pupil Passport, created in collaboration with pupils and parents, that allows the pupils to retain ownership of their personal information that is shared with others,
- 7.3 Specialist resources including communication aids and information technology.
- 7.4 Classroom organisation and management.
- 7.5 Home/school reading schemes.
- 7.6 Behaviour modification programmes.
- 7.7 Effective multi-agency work with experienced professionals
- 7.8 Alternative teaching strategies.

8 GROUPING

- 8.1 Groups are organised by ability not age.
- 8.2 Pupil groupings are varied to encourage the development of social communication.
- 8.3 Pupils are grouped in small class sizes – no more than 8.
- 8.4 Pupils occasionally work 1:1 with a teacher to focus on a particular area of their Appendix A (Individual Education Plan).
- 8.5 Pupils attending lessons at SMMA are accompanied by a teaching assistant to support the pupil's ability to access the learning.

9. EXTERNAL SUPPORT

- 9.1 Professional support is available to pupils, staff, parents/carers and Governors from a broad range of agencies. These include:
 - 9.1.1 LA consultants;
 - 9.1.2 Educational Psychologists;
 - 9.1.3 Consultant Paediatricians;

- 9.1.4 Physiotherapists;
- 9.1.5 Occupational Therapists;
- 9.1.6 Art Therapists
- 9.1.7 Speech and Language Therapists;
- 9.1.8 Linked Social workers;
- 9.1.9 Clinical Psychologists;
- 9.1.10 School Nurse.

10. TRANSITION TO FURTHER EDUCATION

At 14+ the Annual Review for pupils is designated a 'Transition Review'. This begins the process whereby pupils' likely educational needs after 16 are assessed. Further education is explored and arrangements for assessment and link provision considered. A transition plan is drawn up by the case worker in the Islington SEN department..

11. PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AT THE COURTYARD

- 11.1 The Courtyard aims to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and progressive curriculum for each pupil, the aim of which is to include all of the pupils in the process wherever possible.

Agreed and implemented systems of planning, assessment, recording, evaluating and reporting are a prerequisite to delivering this curriculum in a professional, efficient, effective and consistent manner throughout the pupil's school years.

- 11.2 In planning and assessment, particular consideration is given to relevance and progression in order to meet the learning difficulties of the pupils in our school.

11.3 Planning

11.3.1 Teachers are responsible for producing termly and weekly teaching plans linked to the chosen adopted curricula in their area. The planning must form a coherent, relevant and comprehensive learning package. Teachers at the Courtyard use the method of backwards planning which involves the desired learning outcomes being at the forefront of the lesson construction. All of the lesson components are focused on how best to support each pupil to achieve the learning outcome.

- 11.3.2 The reference points are:

- 11.3.2.1 targets set at the Annual Reviews;
- 11.3.2.2 individual academic targets;
- 11.3.2.3 assessment information;
- 11.3.2.4 The Courtyard schemes of work and other adopted curricula; and
- 11.3.2.5 school and departmental policies, coverage plans and schemes of work.

11.3.3 The components of planning are:

- 11.3.3.1 **Appendix A's (Individual Education Plans):** revised and evaluated termly and formally once a year at the Annual Review;
- 11.3.3.2 **Long-term plans:** Coverage plans in all curriculum areas. These ensure breadth and balance and promote ability appropriate learning;
- 11.3.3.3 **Medium-term plans:** Schemes of Work (SoW) written for each curriculum area and teaching level. The SoW for each curriculum area are evaluated for effectiveness at the end of each full term;
- 11.3.3.4 **Medium-term plans:** Individual education plans. These details the four key skill targets for each pupil and the strategies and provision in place to support the pupils in achieving the targets.

11.4 **Assessment: Key Principles**

11.4.1 In the Courtyard, pupils have an entitlement to an assessment process which:

- 11.4.1.1 accurately identifies and tracks their progress;
- 11.4.1.2 highlights strengths and difficulties together with strategies to manage them;
- 11.4.1.3 raises the expectation of success and celebrates a broad range of achievements;
- 11.4.1.4 provides reliable and credible information to support progression in learning;
- 11.4.1.5 is motivating and actively involves them in review and target setting.

11.4.2 In the Courtyard, teaching staff have an entitlement to assessment and recording procedures which:

- 11.4.2.1 are based on clear and shared criteria;
 - 11.4.2.2 are manageable, sustainable, consistent and useful;
 - 11.4.2.3 meet statutory requirements;
 - 11.4.2.4 support quality teaching and learning;
 - 11.4.2.5 yield reliable and valid assessments.
- 11.4.3 From the Courtyard, parents have an entitlement to an assessment and reporting practice which:
- 11.4.3.1 highlights their child's success and progress;
 - 11.4.3.2 identifies weaknesses and how they will be addressed;
 - 11.4.3.3 provides them with opportunities to review and discuss their child's achievements;
 - 11.4.3.4 involves them in helping to meet learning targets;
 - 11.4.3.5 ensures information about their child is detailed, specific and easy to understand.
- 11.4.4 Assessment is the professional starting point within a planning – delivery – recording – evaluation cycle. Assessment includes formal assessment undertaken by others for EHCP purposes, formal regular assessment undertaken by class teachers and other professionals, informal assessment during the course of learning activities and statutory assessment.
- 11.4.5 At the Courtyard this assessment process begins before the pupil starts at the school with a transition period. Further assessments are made when the pupil joins The Courtyard and this information is then used to formulate the first Appendix A (Individual Education Plan) by the end of the pupil's first half term.
- 11.4.6 Teacher assessments of individual pupil's curriculum needs take place termly with the support and advice of therapists and other specialists where appropriate, and will refer to:
- 11.4.6.1 The pupil's EHCP and any reports by the Educational Psychologist and/or other professionals.
 - 11.4.6.2 The targets set at the Annual Review.
 - 11.4.6.3 Regular evaluation and review of each pupils' Appendix A detailing Key Skill targets within:
 - 11.4.6.3.1 social communication;

11.4.6.3.2 academic progress;

11.4.6.3.3 independence;

11.4.6.3.4 inclusion.

11.4.6.4 Termly evaluation of Schemes of Work in all curriculum areas.

11.4.7 Details of the current formal assessment are recorded in the Annual Review Report. These include GCSE Grades and/or Functional Skills equivalents. Formal assessment will also be against any published curricula that have been adopted by the Courtyard.

11.4.8 Annual Reviews are timetabled to take place at the end of each academic year or earlier if required by the Local Authority. Annual Reviews are implemented in accordance with the advice contained in the 1993 Education Act – Code of Practice – Special Educational Needs. Parents/Carers receive an Annual Review Form and Report completed by the Deputy: SEN/Safeguarding and other professionals. Parents and pupils are encouraged to comment on the report and review. Review meetings take place at The Courtyard and are chaired by the Deputy: SEN/Safeguarding or the Headteacher or the Head of 6th form. Parents and other professionals are invited to attend. Agreed recommendations are minuted and sent to all present at the review.

11.4.9 Informal assessment by the teachers takes place during the course of learning activities. Teachers and teaching assistants record and store this by keeping daily notes of observations and the outcomes of learning activities in the pupil's books/on the planning sheets. These notes are used to inform future planning and target setting at the Annual Review. Annotated photographic evidence is used as part of the assessment method.

11.4.10 Statutory assessment arrangements for those pupils who access KS4 & KS5 examinations are carried out in accordance with the current guidance provided by the relevant examination boards.

12. ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF COMPLAINTS

The procedure for managing complaints is to contact the Headteacher of The Courtyard, Deborah Shepherd, Deborah.shepherd@smmathecourtyard.org / 02038596350. Upon contacting the appropriate person, the expected timeframe for response is 5 working days. The response will be in the form of a telephone call or written letter, sent first-class, whichever is deemed to be most appropriate. For more information, please refer to the Complaints Policy, located in the Website Published Documents.

13. LEGISLATION

13.1 Maintained schools – The Education (Special Educational Needs) (Information) Regulations 1999: SI 1999/2506.

13.2 Academies and free schools – Section 1(8) of the Academies Act 2010.

13.3 Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014.

13.4 Also see The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice January 2015 (SEND Code).