



St Mary
Magdalene
Academy

THE COURTYARD

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

St Mary Magdalene Academy is a Christian community of learning. We aim to nurture young people to become high achievers and to discover their vocation in the global society.

“Show by a good life that your works are done by gentleness born of wisdom”
James 3.13

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 the SEN Code of Practice. It reflects the new 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 students aged 14-18. Students at The Courtyard all possess a Statement of Special Educational Need/Education, Health and Care Plan ('EHCP') for autism spectrum disorder and/or speech, language and communication needs. Many students at The Courtyard also have additional difficulties (e.g. physical, sensory, communication and emotional/behavioural).
- 2.2 Admissions to the school are managed via the SEN department of Islington Council. Students are accepted throughout the academic year. We implement transition programmes for all students prior to placement. Placement at The Courtyard is kept under constant review and specifically through the Annual Review process which monitors the students Statement of Special Educational Need/EHCP. The school accepts students 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 be accessible for disabled people both in terms of premises and provision 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 student 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 student, 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 student and not the disability and to ensure that education (and not care) remains paramount. This will include identifying what motivates each child, being aware of any barriers to learning and using that knowledge to encourage them to 'have a go' for themselves.

- 3.3 To ensure that students 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 student, enabling the development of independence.
- 3.5 To ensure that each student has a personalised curriculum which is tailored towards the specific needs of each individual student.
- 3.6 To work effectively with the St Mary Magdalene Academy to offer a range of academic subjects which our students can access with the direct support of The Courtyard staff.
- 3.7 To offer opportunities and experiences for students to learn in a multitude of different ways and through a rich, varied and individualised curriculum.
- 3.8 To ensure that all students are engaged in learning activities appropriate to their abilities.
- 3.9 To encourage students to monitor their progress and to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning.
- 3.10 To give students 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 students and staff.
- 3.12 To learn and share information, to the benefit of our students through mutually supportive relationships with parents, specialists and outside agencies.
- 3.13 To ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place to protect students 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, student shadowing, participation in school events, Governor training, classroom observations.

5. SCHOOL STAFF

- 5.1 The individual needs of the students 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 disorder;
 - 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 student may be experiencing, e.g. physical disability, ADHD.
- 5.2 Professional development opportunities are available to all staff to meet the needs of the students. Staff are encouraged to support each other and to share expertise.
- 5.3 The school employs its own Speech and Language Therapist.
- 5.4 The Headteacher of The Courtyard acts as the SENCO for the school. The Headteacher is responsible for:
 - 5.4.1 the day-to-day operation of the SEN Policy;
 - 5.4.2 co-ordinating provision for students;
 - 5.4.3 liaising with parents/carers of students;
 - 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 student's needs;
- 5.4.8 liaising with other schools regarding the transfer of students and to ensure that the relevant records are made available;
- 5.4.9 responsibility for children with statements of special educational needs / EHCP 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 student's Individual Education Plan;
- 5.5.2 referring concerns and/or additional needs to the Headteacher;
- 5.5.3 monitoring progress against the targets stipulated in each student's IEP; and
- 5.5.4 liaising with parents and students.

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 Statement 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 the

Statement/EHCP. The Courtyard will support parents/carers with this process, liaising with support agencies and Islington Council where necessary.

7. RESOURCES

- 7.1 Staffing levels are higher than in mainstream schools.
- 7.2 Additional staffing, IEP's, a differentiated curriculum and small group teaching supports all students.
- 7.3 Specialist resources including communication aids and information technology supplement to educational resources normally available in schools.
- 7.4 Classroom organisation and management.
- 7.5 In-class support by teacher.
- 7.6 Small group work.
- 7.7 Home/school reading schemes.
- 7.8 Behaviour modification programmes.
- 7.9 Use of specialist equipment.
- 7.10 Alternative teaching strategies.

8 GROUPING

- 8.1 Groups are organised by ability not age.
- 8.2 Student groupings are varied to encourage the development of social communication.
- 8.3 Students are grouped in small class sizes – no more than 8.
- 8.4 Students occasionally work 1:1 with a teacher to focus on a particular area of their IEP.
- 8.5 Students attending GCSE lessons at SMMA are accompanied by a teaching assistant to support the student's ability to access the learning.

9. EXTERNAL SUPPORT

9.1 Professional support is available to students, 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 Connexions Advisers;

9.1.7 Youth Careers Adviser;

9.1.8 Linked Social workers;

9.1.9 Clinical Psychologists;

9.1.10 Education Welfare Officer; and

9.1.11 RESPOND Therapist.

10. TRANSITION TO FURTHER EDUCATION

At 14+ the Annual Review for students is designated a 'Transition Review'. This begins the process whereby students' 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 Youth Careers Adviser which involves all agencies including Islington Youth Careers Team. The review also looks briefly at likely needs post 18 when social services and health authorities assume lead responsibility for meeting needs.

11. PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AT THE COURTYARD

11.1 The Courtyard aims to provide a broad, balanced, relevant and progressive curriculum for each student. The aim of this is to include all of the students 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 student'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 students 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 student 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;

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 **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 plan. This details the four key skill targets for each student and the strategies and provision in place to support the students in achieving the targets;

11.3.3.5 **Short-term plans:** Weekly plans which record learning outcomes, structures of learning support and independent activities, plenary tasks and assessments for each lesson.

11.4 **Assessment: Key Principles**

11.4.1 In The Courtyard, students 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 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 statementing 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 student starts at the school with a transition period. Further assessments are made when the student joins The Courtyard and this information is then used to formulate the first Individual Education Plan (IEP) by the end of the students first half term in school.
- 11.4.6 Teacher assessments of individual student'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 student's statement of special educational needs 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 students' IEP 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 NC levels 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 2001 (in relation to statements) and 2015 (in relation to EHCPs) SEN Codes of Practice. Parents/Carers receive an Annual Review Form and Report completed by the Headteacher and other professionals. Parents and students are encouraged to comment on the report and review. Review meetings take place at The Courtyard and are chaired by the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher. 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 students' 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 students who access KS4 & KS5 NC 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, , or the Executive Director of the St Mary Magdalene Academy Trust. 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 July 2014 (SEND Code).

Signed: _____
(Headteacher)

Date: _____

Signed: _____
(Chair Governing Body)

Date: _____