

The St Michael Steiner School

Policy for Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The term SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) is used for a variety of conditions that can prevent a child from learning in a straightforward, age-appropriate manner.

In keeping with the educational philosophy and pedagogy of Rudolf Steiner, we recognise that all children have individual needs. Where children are identified as having a SEN, every effort is made to give them any extra support they may need, but it is important that their parents understand that, **as a Steiner Waldorf school, we have a particular view of education and of child development, and so will work with their children in a way that is significantly different from that used in other schools.** To enable the child to truly thrive, the trust and support of the parents for the teachers' work and the school's curriculum and methods is essential.

The richness and diversity of our curriculum, which integrates intellectual, practical, physical and artistic development, provides what any child needs to flourish, and is also indispensable for children with SEND. Sometimes this is all they need, and sometimes they need more support.

Elements of our normal practice from which children with SEND benefit include:

- Whenever possible the teacher stays with the same group of children from classes 1 to 8.
- Regular speech work, learning poems by heart and developing clear enunciation-helps with writing and spelling skills.
- Regular movement in the classroom, skipping, throwing and catching and body co-ordination games.
- Woodwork and crafts develop manual skills, aesthetic sense, dexterity and confidence.
- Regular eurythmy lessons.
- Regular singing and flute playing.
- The teachers deliver their lessons orally which means that the child with literacy difficulties can participate fully in the work of the class.
- Main lesson blocks take place over a period of 3 or 4 weeks at a time, so that the children can become fully immersed in the particular subject.
- Work and expectations are differentiated to suit the children's needs.
- We work with Child Study, a concentrated study of one child at a time, undertaken by all the teachers in the school. Every child in the school is studied in turn, so that that all the teachers know all the children well and can decide together what kind of work and support is needed in each case.
- Teachers keep in close and regular contact with parents. Discussions are confidential and records are kept.

- As part of our application process, a three-day trial period is offered, during which the child is carefully observed. After this, the child is interviewed and the Class Teacher meets with the parents to discuss the observations and those of the subject teachers. Given the nature of our premises, our curriculum and methods, the make-up of the group that the particular child would enter, and the availability of additional classroom support if needed, a decision is made in the best interests of all.

In addition, when special needs or difficulties are identified:

- We give extra support, as sensitively as possible, within the classroom. However, one to one lessons may be offered outside the classroom when necessary or beneficial.*
- The school offers one-to-one eurythmy therapy. This works with rhythm, co-ordination and balance and can help with many things including sequencing, tracking (eyes), dyslexia, concentration, memory and speech.*
- Each child is offered an appointment with the Anthroposophical School Doctor (a fully qualified medical practitioner who is further trained in the understanding of the human being from Rudolf Steiner's perspective) and the recommendations put into practice.
- The School may sometimes call on other professionals, to give advice and/or therapies.*
- For children who have an Educational and Health Care Plan (EHCP), we liaise with the relevant professional external bodies involved and have regular reviews with the parents, and with the child where age-appropriate.

We adhere to the statutory guidelines set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2015, and work with our best endeavour for each child.

*Please note that the cost of therapies and one-to-one sessions is not included in the school fees.