



Inclusion Strategy – St Stephens Community Academy

This statement details our school's approach to delivering inclusive practice for all children, including those with SEND, funded by our core school budget (including the notional SEN budget) and the inclusive mainstream fund (IMF).

Strategy overview

Detail	Date
Academic year/years that our current Inclusion Strategy covers	2026-2027
Date this statement was published	December 2026
Date on which it will be reviewed	July 2027
Statement authorised by	Headteacher and Governing Body

Statement of intent

At St Stephens Community Academy, inclusion is central to our vision of embracing learning, inspiring ambition and celebrating individuality. We are committed to ensuring that all pupils, including those with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage, feel a sense of belonging, participate fully in school life and achieve their potential within an ambitious and inclusive curriculum.

Our approach is based on early identification of need, strong partnerships with families, evidence-informed practice and high-quality adaptive teaching which enables pupils to access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. We recognise that barriers to learning may arise from SEND, social and emotional needs, communication differences, physical and sensory needs, attendance challenges or wider socio-economic factors. Our strategy focuses on removing these barriers through inclusive practice rather than reducing expectations

Barriers to learning and participation

This details the key barriers to learning and participation that we have identified amongst our pupils, necessitating inclusive universal approaches and targeted support

Detail of barrier to learning <i>(including notable trends or themes over time, such as a growing prevalence or increasing complexity)</i>
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1	Communication and interaction. Difficulties with understanding language, expressing ideas, following instructions, and developing social communication skills affecting engagement, relationships, and access to learning. Accessing specialist support and county SEND assessments is becoming increasingly difficult and puts a growing demand on the school's capacity to support. The county SEND team is overloaded with referrals being delayed, in some cases for over 18 months. This includes children awaiting EHCP confirmation at Stage 2.
2	Cognition and learning Barriers relating to processing, memory, literacy, numeracy, and learning new concepts impacting progress, confidence, and independent learning.
3	SEMH (including trauma-informed needs) Emotional, social, and mental health needs, including the effects of trauma, anxiety, and attachment difficulties, affecting behaviour, wellbeing, relationships, and readiness to learn. There are a growing number of children who need this support and our work with external agencies is vital to support them and their families. The impact on their peers is also notable.
4	Physical and sensory needs. Physical disabilities, medical conditions, sensory processing differences, hearing impairment, or visual impairment impact access to the environment, curriculum, and wider school activities. The demand on external specialist support places greater emphasis on the school's capacity to provide high - quality practice.
5	Attendance challenges. Anxiety, health needs, family circumstances, or previous negative experiences of education affecting attendance, leading to reduced learning opportunities and social participation. This has greatly improved with our work using the Parental Engagement Framework. Those yet to reach families can be increasingly complex.

Activity in this academic year

What activities will we prioritise this academic year to alleviate the above barriers to learning and participation faced by pupils with additional needs and SEND. In this context, 'activity' is a reporting term to help understand where funding has been allocated to build an inclusive core offer and does not indicate only targeted provision. Activity may address multiple barriers identified, particularly for improvements to your universal offer.

Description of activity <i>(noting evidence and barrier numbers addressed)</i>	Activity type <i>(whether it is universal or targeted)</i>	Total budgeted cost <i>(this should account for spend from IMF and core budget allocations)</i>
High-quality adaptive teaching (1,2,4)	U	£5,000

Evidence-based interventions (small group/short-term) (1-4)	T	£4,500
SEND and trauma-informed staff training (1-5)	U	£1,000
Inclusive enrichment; accessibility improvement (1-4)	U	£1,000
Specialist support (individualised and external agency involvement) (5)	T and U	£500

Intended outcomes

This explains the clear, realistic outcomes we want our inclusive approaches to achieve **by the end of our inclusion strategy**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Physical, sensory and communication-friendly environments; adapted materials and assistive technology	- Reasonable adjustments are routinely made and reviewed for pupils with identified needs. Adapted resources are available in all classrooms and used consistently. Appropriate assistive technology is identified, provided and embedded into everyday learning. - Pupils report that the environment helps them to access learning independently and confidently. - Accessibility audits demonstrate continuous improvement in inclusive provision.
Adaptive teaching as the first intervention; inclusive pedagogy; staff training in SEND and trauma-informed approaches	- Adaptive teaching strategies are evident in all lessons and are routinely used before additional interventions are considered. - Teachers demonstrate strong understanding of SEND and barriers to learning. - Trauma-informed approaches are consistently applied across the school. - Staff confidently adapt instruction, resources and outcomes to meet diverse needs. - Monitoring shows that pupils with SEND make progress within quality-first teaching. - Professional development leads to measurable improvements in classroom practice.
High-quality teaching with curriculum designed for all learners	- The curriculum is ambitious, broad and accessible for all learners. - Learning is sequenced to support progress while allowing flexibility for differing needs.

	• Teaching provides appropriate challenge and support for all pupils. • Assessment informs planning and responds to pupils' strengths and barriers. • Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum and participate meaningfully in all subjects. • Progress data demonstrates improved outcomes for vulnerable and SEND groups.
A safe and respectful culture fostering belonging, attendance and participation in learning	• Pupils feel safe, valued and respected within the school community. • Attendance for pupils with SEND and vulnerable groups improves and is closely monitored. • Exclusions, suspensions and incidents of discriminatory behaviour reduce over time. • Positive relationships between staff and pupils are evident throughout the school. • Pupils participate actively in learning, leadership opportunities and wider school life. • Pupil voice demonstrates a strong sense of belonging and inclusion.
Strong partnerships with families and wider services	• Parents and carers feel listened to, informed and actively involved in decision-making. • Communication with families is timely, accessible and solution focused. • Multi-agency working is effective and supports improved outcomes for pupils. • Referrals to external services are appropriate, timely and well-coordinated. • Families report confidence in the school's support for their child. • Improvements in pupil attendance, wellbeing and progress can be evidenced through collaborative working.
Evidence-based support prioritising early intervention	• Needs are identified early through effective assessment and monitoring processes. • Interventions are selected using evidence-informed approaches. • Support is targeted, time-bound and evaluated regularly for impact. • Provision maps clearly demonstrate intended outcomes and next steps. • Most pupils receiving intervention make expected or better progress towards individual targets. • Data shows reduced gaps in attainment, attendance and participation over time.

Review of the previous academic year. N/A this year.

As this is the first published Inclusion Strategy developed under the requirements of the Department for Education's Inclusive Mainstream Fund, a formal review section will be completed from 2027 onwards.

During 2025–2026, St Stephens Community Academy continued to strengthen inclusive practice through improvements in adaptive teaching, SEND provision, pastoral support, attendance monitoring and family engagement. School self-evaluation identified strengths in early identification, supportive relationships and inclusive classroom practice, alongside opportunities to further strengthen equitable access to enrichment, consistency of adaptive teaching and accessibility across the learning environment. Pupil voice is a key driver in supporting impact.

These findings have informed the priorities identified within this strategy and will form the baseline against which progress will be measured throughout 2026–2027.

Further information

Inclusion is built into our everyday practice rather than delivered as a separate provision. Through strong leadership, inclusive teaching and effective partnership every pupil is supported to succeed. The seven DfE principles of inclusion are embedded throughout our strategic planning, curriculum design, enrichment provision, safeguarding culture and engagement with families. We work closely with governors, pupils, parents, staff and external professionals to continually evaluate and improve our inclusive practice, ensuring that every child is known, valued and supported to succeed.