Inclusion Strategy – St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Inclusive Mainstream Fund | 2026–2027

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 covered	2026–2027
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Statement of intent

St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy is situated in Littleover, Derby, within the Diocese of Nottingham, and welcomes children aged 4–11.

At the heart of our school is our mission statement:

Grow in Faith, have Faith in Growing.

We recognise every child as a unique individual, created with God-given talents, strengths and needs, and believe that all children deserve to feel valued, safe and able to flourish.

Our school values are:

Kindness

Respect

Faith

Forgiveness

Perseverance

Acceptance

Service

These values underpin our commitment to inclusion. We celebrate diversity and strive to ensure that every child, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), along with other vulnerabilities, can access an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum, achieve their potential and participate meaningfully in school life.

Our aim is to remove barriers to learning, communication, wellbeing and participation so that all pupils develop confidence, independence and a strong sense of belonging. We want every child to feel listened to, experience success and leave St George's equipped to contribute positively to society.

Our inclusion strategy is built around seven principles:

1. Ambitious leadership and governance that embeds inclusion

Leaders and governors prioritise inclusion within school improvement, ensuring that provision is planned, monitored and responsive to pupils' needs.

2. Evidence-based support prioritising early intervention
   Assessment, pupil voice, family knowledge and the graduated assess–plan–do–review cycle help us identify needs early, implement appropriate support and evaluate its impact.
3. High-quality adaptive teaching with curriculum designed for all learners
   Staff use adaptive teaching, explicit routines, early language support and appropriate scaffolding to make learning accessible while maintaining high expectations.
4. Enriching provision beyond the classroom that all children can access
   We develop inclusive play, social opportunities and enrichment so that pupils with SEND can participate alongside their peers.
5. A safe and respectful culture fostering belonging, attendance, and participation in learning
   Positive relationships, consistent expectations and pastoral support help pupils feel secure, valued and ready to learn.
6. Strong partnerships with families and wider services
   We work collaboratively with parents and carers, pupils, staff and external professionals through regular communication, review meetings, pupil voice and multi-agency support.
7. Inclusive environments with continuous improvements to accessibility
   We review physical spaces, resources, sensory needs and reasonable adjustments to reduce barriers to access, communication, independence and participation.

Our inclusion strategy is informed by ongoing dialogue with pupils, parents and carers, staff, governors and external professionals. Through pupil voice, parent workshops, review meetings, regular communication, staff feedback and multi-agency working, we seek to understand families' experiences, identify barriers and recognise what helps children feel safe, included and able to learn.

Feedback and observations inform our priorities, including improving access to play and unstructured times, strengthening communication and oracy, and refining adaptive teaching and support. We work collaboratively with families and the wider school community to review provision, celebrate progress and identify further improvements, ensuring that our approach reflects the needs and experiences of the children we serve.

The Inclusion Mainstream Fund (IMF) will strengthen, not replace, provision funded through our core and notional SEN budgets, alongside our main budget. It will support sustainable improvements to whole-school capacity, inclusive practice, classroom oracy and access to unstructured times. We will evaluate impact through pupil progress, attendance, engagement, participation, wellbeing and feedback from pupils and families, using this evidence to refine provision over time.

Through our shared commitment, we aim to ensure that every child at St George's can belong, participate, learn and thrive.

Cohort needs analysis as of September 2026

At St George's Catholic Voluntary Academy, analysis of assessment information, SEND data, attendance patterns and contextual factors enables us to identify the most commonly occurring and predictable needs within our cohort.

SEND

In Foundation Stage 2 to Year 6, 45 of our children are identified on our SEND Register, which is the equivalent of 13% of our cohort, 29 of which are PPG which equates to 64.4% of our over number on roll.
Similarly, 13 of our children have an Educational Health Care Plan, which is the equivalent of 3.7%, 6 of which are PPG, equating to 46.2% of our overall number on roll.
We have 1 further child currently undergoing an Education, Health and Care Needs assessment (EHCNA).

Attendance and EBSNA

St George's currently has a low Persistent Absence (PA) figure of 8.7%. Whilst this isn't a concerning figure, attendance is consistently an area to we look to further improve, and we are committed to identifying and addressing barriers that may prevent pupils from attending school regularly. Of the overall PA figure, 8.9% relates to pupils with SEND and/or an EHCP. Through the Inclusion Mainstream Fund, we aim to strengthen early identification, improve engagement and develop targeted approaches that support pupils to attend regularly and access school successfully.

We have also identified 16 pupils experiencing difficulties informed by Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA), including six pupils with SEND. These experiences highlight the importance of understanding the individual factors affecting attendance, wellbeing and a pupil's sense of safety and belonging. IMF-funded developments will help us strengthen preventative support, work collaboratively with families and relevant professionals, and reduce barriers to attendance, participation and engagement.

Barriers to learning and participation

Access to inclusive, purposeful and engaging unstructured times

Some pupils, particularly those with SEND, other additional needs and vulnerabilities, can experience greater barriers during less structured parts of the school day, including break and lunchtime. Less predictable environments, social demands, noise, physical space and limited access to engaging play opportunities can make it harder for some pupils to participate successfully, develop friendships and feel a strong sense of belonging.

At St George's, we want to move towards a more inclusive approach to unstructured times in which all pupils have access to a wide range of purposeful play, social and physical opportunities, with the environment and adult support enabling pupils to participate rather than creating barriers.

	Detail of barrier to learning
1	Further embedding and strengthening adaptive teaching approaches to remove barriers and ensure all pupils can access ambitious learning.
2	Limited access to inclusive, purposeful and engaging play opportunities during unstructured times. Environmental and sensory barriers limit some pupils' access to enjoyable and inclusive unstructured times
3	Barriers to communication and confidence that limit pupils' participation in classroom talk and opportunities to express their ideas.

Priority 1: Adaptive Teaching – Embedding Inclusive Classroom Practice

High-quality adaptive teaching is already an established part of the inclusive offer St George's. Through this priority, we will further embed and strengthen consistency across the school so that teachers routinely anticipate barriers and adapt teaching, resources and the learning environment in response to pupils' needs, while maintaining ambitious expectations and access to the full curriculum.

Some pupils with SEND and other additional needs may face barriers when teaching approaches, explanations, resources or tasks do not sufficiently account for differences in prior knowledge, language, working memory, sensory needs or pace of learning. We will build on existing practice through shared expectations, professional dialogue, modelling, learning walks and review of pupil progress. This will include clear explanations and modelling, checking for

understanding, appropriate scaffolding, flexible ways to practice and record learning, and timely use of assessment to decide when support should be adjusted or removed to promote independence.

The impact will be evaluated through learning walks, planning and work scrutiny where appropriate, staff voice, pupil voice, assessment information and existing SEND/APDR processes. We will consider whether adaptive teaching is increasingly consistent, pupils are accessing ambitious learning with their peers, and adaptations are improving engagement, independence and progress rather than creating unnecessary separation or dependence.

Inclusion principles linked to this priority

• Ambitious leadership and governance – include adaptive teaching within school improvement planning, staff development and leadership monitoring, with clear responsibility for consistency and impact.
• Evidence-based support – use assessment, pupil voice and APDR to identify barriers early, select appropriate adaptations and review their impact.
• High-quality teaching – continue to develop consistent adaptive teaching that anticipates barriers, supports access to an ambitious curriculum and promotes independence.
• Inclusive environments – ensure classroom environments, learning materials and ways of accessing and recording learning are accessible and responsive to pupils' needs.
• Strong partnerships – draw on family knowledge and relevant specialist advice to inform adaptations when needed.

Priority 2: OPAL – Inclusive Unstructured Times

St George's will use Inclusive Mainstream Funding to support the implementation of OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning), with a particular focus on removing barriers to participation during break and lunchtime.

For some pupils, particularly those with additional needs and vulnerabilities, less structured parts of the school day can present increased barriers relating to sensory needs, social interaction, communication, regulation, physical access and the availability of engaging activities. We will move towards an approach in which unstructured times are genuinely inclusive, enabling every child to belong, participate and flourish.

IMF funding will support the development of a wider range of accessible, open-ended and purposeful play opportunities, alongside improvements to the outdoor environment and resources. The implementation will be informed by pupil voice and staff observations and will consider how pupils with SEND can participate successfully alongside their peers.

The work will also build staff capacity to facilitate inclusive play, promote independence and reduce barriers rather than relying on withdrawal or adult-directed activities as the primary response to difficulties during unstructured times.

The impact will be evaluated through pupil participation, pupil voice, wellbeing and engagement data, staff observations and relevant SEND/APDR evidence. We will specifically consider whether pupils who have previously experienced barriers during unstructured times are increasingly able to access, enjoy and sustain play alongside their peers.

The funding will therefore contribute to a sustainable, whole-school approach to inclusion, with OPAL becoming part of St George's wider inclusive provision rather than a separate SEND intervention.

Inclusion principles linked to this priority

- Accessible and enriching provision – extending inclusion beyond the classroom

  OPAL will widen access to engaging, creative, physical and social play opportunities for all pupils.

- Safe and respectful culture – fostering belonging and attendance

  Inclusive play will support positive relationships, wellbeing and a stronger sense of belonging.

- Inclusive environments – continually improving accessibility

  Outdoor spaces and resources will be adapted to meet diverse needs, promoting choice, independence and participation.

- Evidence-based support – prioritising early intervention

  Pupil voice and staff observations will identify barriers and inform improvements to play provision.

- Ambitious leadership and governance – embedding inclusion in planning

  Leaders will embed OPAL within school improvement planning and review its impact on inclusive practice.

Priority 3: Oracy – Developing Every Pupil's Voice

St George's will also use Inclusive Mainstream Funding to develop an oracy project that strengthens pupils' confidence and competence in speaking, listening, explaining ideas and participating in purposeful dialogue. Oracy will support pupils to learn through talk as well as to express what they know, think and feel.

Some pupils, particularly those with SEND, speech, language and communication needs and other vulnerabilities, may experience barriers to contributing to classroom discussion, understanding and using vocabulary, explaining their thinking or making their views heard. The project will develop consistent opportunities for structured talk across the curriculum, including explicit modelling, vocabulary development, partner talk, discussion routines and appropriate scaffolds or communication supports. Pupils will be supported to participate in ways that are accessible to them, while maintaining high expectations for everyone.

The impact will be evaluated through pupil voice, classroom observations and learning walks, staff feedback, and relevant assessment and APDR evidence. We will look for increased confidence and participation in talk, improved access to classroom learning and evidence that pupils with communication needs are increasingly able to contribute meaningfully.

Inclusion principles linked to this priority

• Evidence-based support – identify pupils' communication and participation barriers early, use assessment and observation to inform support, and review whether strategies are effective.
• High-quality teaching – explicitly teach and model speaking, listening, vocabulary and discussion skills, with scaffolds that enable all pupils to access purposeful classroom talk.
• Safe and respectful culture – establish respectful discussion routines in which pupils feel listened to, valued and confident to share ideas.
• Strong partnerships – use pupil and family knowledge, alongside relevant professional advice where appropriate, to understand communication strengths and needs.

Funding across the three priorities

The IMF will support the further embedding of adaptive teaching, the implementation of OPAL and further work embedding oracy across school, with an indicative allocation of approximately one third of the available funding to each priority. Final expenditure will reflect implementation requirements and value for money. Funding will enhance, rather than replace, provision delivered through the core and notional SEN budgets and our overall funding allocation.

Activity in this academic year

Description of activity	Activity type	Total budgeted cost from IMF funding
Adaptive Teaching - £4,000.00 Further embed existing adaptive teaching practice through shared expectations, staff development, professional dialogue, modelling and review. Support teachers to anticipate barriers, adapt explanations, resources and approaches, and maintain ambitious learning while promoting pupils' independence.	Universal	• Staff CPD and collaborative professional development - £1,500 • Modelling effective adaptive teaching and peer observation - £1,000 • Development and purchase of accessible resources, visual supports and assistive tools - • £1,500
OPAL - £6,300.00 Use learning from the OPAL implementation to review the outdoor environment and identify adaptations that enable pupils with different sensory, physical, communication and social needs to access play successfully. Develop clearly defined spaces and resources that provide choice, appropriate challenge and opportunities for regulation while maintaining access to the wider playground environment. Develop staff understanding of inclusive play, the needs of pupils with SEND and the role of adults in facilitating successful participation. Use OPAL implementation, pupil voice and review activity to establish consistent approaches to supporting children who experience barriers during unstructured times.	Universal	• OPAL implementation / membership / support - £1,800 • Development of play spaces - £1,700 • Outdoor play equipment and open-ended resources - £1,700 • Accessible / adapted resources - £600 • Staff training and implementation CPD - £500
Oracy - £4,375.00 Develop an oracy project that builds pupils' confidence and competence in speaking, listening, vocabulary and purposeful dialogue across the curriculum. Use explicit modelling, structured talk routines and appropriate scaffolds or communication supports to ensure pupils with SEND and communication needs can contribute meaningfully.	Universal	• Staff CPD on explicit oracy teaching, modelling and structured talk routines - £1,400 • Oracy resources, vocabulary supports and visual communication aids - £1,100 • Development and implementation of consistent oracy approaches across the curriculum - £975 • Targeted communication resources and scaffolds to support pupils with SEND - £900
	Total	£14,675.00

Intended outcomes

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Adaptive teaching is consistently embedded across the school, enabling pupils with SEND to access learning and make progress.	• Learning walks, staff dialogue and review of assessment/APDR evidence show increasing consistency in anticipating and removing barriers. • Pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities access ambitious learning alongside peers, with adaptations that support engagement, progress and independence. • Staff can confidently explain how they assess the impact of adaptations and adjust them when needed.
Pupils experience fewer barriers to participation, social interaction, wellbeing and belonging during break and lunchtime, with inclusive environments and skilled staff enabling them to regulate their emotions, develop independence and participate meaningfully in play and wider school life.	• Pupils independently access and choose from a broader range of engaging play opportunities that reflect their interests, strengths and sensory needs. • Pupils access open-ended, imaginative, creative, physical, social and exploratory play. • Play spaces, equipment and resources accommodate different activity levels, sensory needs and preferences, supporting regulation, social interaction and participation. • Barriers relating to noise, space, activity levels, sensory demands and social interaction are identified and reduced, enabling pupils with SEND and additional needs to participate alongside their peers. • Staff demonstrate the knowledge and confidence to facilitate inclusive play, respond to emerging needs and promote independence without unnecessarily restricting play or removing pupils from activities. • Pupils who previously experienced difficulties during unstructured times demonstrate increased confidence, engagement, positive social interaction and a stronger sense of belonging. • Pupils' views, interests and experiences inform decisions about play opportunities, resources and the development of the environment. • Observations, pupil voice and staff feedback are used to review and adapt provision, evidencing improved access, participation and inclusion for pupils with additional needs.
Pupils demonstrate increased confidence and improved access to purposeful classroom talk, developing their speaking, listening and communication skills.	• Pupils demonstrate increased confidence in contributing to discussions, explaining their thinking, listening and responding to others, and using relevant vocabulary. • Pupil voice and classroom observations demonstrate that pupils with SEND, communication needs and other vulnerabilities actively participate in meaningful classroom dialogue. • Staff feedback and assessment/APDR evidence demonstrate the impact of strategies on pupils' communication, confidence and participation, informing ongoing review and refinement of practice.

How we know we are making a difference

✓ Attendance and engagement

Pupils who previously experienced barriers to attendance, engagement or participation demonstrate improved engagement in learning and school life, with reduced patterns of withdrawal or avoidance where relevant.

◆ Participation and inclusion

Pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities participate more confidently and independently in classroom learning, purposeful talk and play alongside their peers, with fewer barriers preventing them from accessing opportunities.

▲ Progress, achievement and communication

Pupils make measurable progress towards their identified outcomes through the APDR cycle, including improvements in independence, communication, social interaction and self-regulation where relevant.

Pupils demonstrate increased confidence in speaking and listening, contribute more meaningfully to classroom discussions and develop their ability to express ideas, explain thinking and use appropriate vocabulary.

♥ Wellbeing and independence

Pupils demonstrate improved confidence, emotional regulation, enjoyment and sense of belonging, supported by pupil voice, staff observations and pastoral evidence.

Pupils increasingly use strategies and adaptations to manage barriers, regulate their emotions and participate successfully, reducing unnecessary reliance on adult support.

✦ Pupil voice

Pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities report that they feel listened to, included and able to access learning, communicate their views and participate in classroom and unstructured activities.

Pupil feedback demonstrates increased confidence, choice and enjoyment, with identified concerns informing further improvements to provision.

✉ Parent/carer feedback

Parent/carer feedback indicates improved confidence in the school's ability to meet their child's needs, alongside positive changes in their child's communication, engagement, friendships and wellbeing where relevant.

◆ Staff practice and implementation

Learning walks, planning scrutiny and professional dialogue demonstrate more consistent adaptive teaching, with staff anticipating barriers and adapting explanations, resources, scaffolds and environments to enable pupils with SEND to access ambitious learning.

Classroom observations and pupil outcomes demonstrate that structured talk routines, explicit vocabulary teaching and appropriate communication scaffolds enabling more pupils, including those with SEND, to contribute meaningfully and make progress.

Measuring impact over time

To ensure that our approach to inclusion leads to sustained improvement, we will review impact against the following milestones:

Milestone	Intended Impact
By the end of 2026–2027	Inclusive play opportunities and environments are enhanced to reduce barriers to participation, social interaction and regulation during unstructured times. Staff

Milestone	Intended Impact
	demonstrate increased confidence in facilitating inclusive play, implementing adaptive teaching and using strategies that promote pupils' independence. Oracy approaches are established across the school, with pupils, including those with SEND and communication needs, having more frequent and meaningful opportunities to develop vocabulary, express their ideas and contribute to classroom discussions. Baseline evidence, pupil voice and observations are used to evaluate initial impact and identify next steps.
By the end of 2027–2028	Inclusive play, adaptive teaching and oracy are embedded more consistently across the school. Pupil voice and observations demonstrate improved participation, confidence, independence, social interaction and sense of belonging during unstructured times. Classroom observations and assessment evidence show that pupils with SEND can access learning more effectively, contribute more confidently to purposeful talk and make progress towards their identified outcomes. Provision is refined in response to evidence of impact.
Within three years	Inclusion is embedded within everyday school practice, with staff routinely anticipating and reducing barriers to learning, communication and participation. Pupils with SEND experience improved access to ambitious learning, purposeful classroom talk and inclusive play alongside their peers. Sustained improvements are evidenced through pupil outcomes, engagement, participation, wellbeing and pupil voice, with established review processes ensuring that provision continues to respond to pupils' needs.

Review of the previous academic year

N/A for this academic year.

Further information

This strategy should be read alongside St George's SEND Information Report, Accessibility Plan, Pupil Premium Strategy and School Improvement Plan. All of which can be viewed on our website. The funding will enhance, rather than replace, ordinarily available provision and statutory responsibilities by supporting implementation of a whole-school inclusive approach to unstructured times, with particular benefit for pupils who currently experience barriers to participation.