

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Inclusion Base Policy



‘Do Everything in Love’ 16:14

Corinthians

**Love Ourselves. Love Others. Love Learning. Love Our
World.**

School: Sacred Heart Primary School

Policy owner: Claire Gilhooly

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Policy statement

At Sacred Heart Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that every pupil is included, valued and enabled to achieve and thrive. Our Inclusion Bases are an integral part of our mainstream school provision. It provides targeted teaching, intervention, specialist support and a carefully adapted environment for pupils whose needs cannot consistently be met through ordinarily available classroom provision alone.

The Inclusion Bases are not a separate school, an alternative provision setting or a sanction. It is part of our mainstream offer and will strengthen inclusion across the whole school.

This policy reflects the Department for Education's Inclusion bases in schools guidance, published in June 2026. **The guidance defines inclusion bases as provision within mainstream settings for pupilren with additional needs**, including pupils with SEND and those requiring behavioural or pastoral support. It emphasises that bases should enable pupils to remain active members of the mainstream school community, maximise access to mainstream classes and provide high-quality teaching and specialist support.

Rationale

The DfE's 2026 Every pupil achieving and thriving white paper sets out an ambition for a more inclusive mainstream education system in which pupils can receive flexible, timely and accessible support within their local communities. It identifies early, local, fair, effective and shared approaches as key principles of reform.

The DfE's June 2026 guidance recognises that high-quality inclusion bases can provide:

specialist and targeted teaching;

bespoke learning environments;

flexible access to specialist education and health support;

support for academic, social and emotional development;

opportunities for pupils to increase their participation in mainstream education;

The evidence base for inclusion bases is developing. The DfE explicitly recognises that existing academic research is relatively limited in scale and scope and has commissioned further research into what works. Consequently, our Inclusion Bases will use evidence-informed practice, robust assessment and continuous evaluation rather than assuming that the existence of a specialist space automatically produces positive outcomes. The use of these spaces will continuously be monitored and reviewed by the SENCO and Head teacher as part of our quality of education monitoring processes.

The school will use the Inclusion Bases as part of a graduated continuum of support, rather than as a destination for pupils who are experiencing difficulty in mainstream lessons.

Intent

Our Inclusion Bases exists to:

Promote belonging

Every pupil accessing an Inclusion Base will remain a valued member of the school community. Pupils will have meaningful opportunities to participate in mainstream classroom activities alongside their peers. This may be through accessing assemblies, playtimes, lunchtime, enrichment, trips, celebrations and other aspects of school life.

Remove barriers to learning

Through a carefully planned environment the space will enable pupilren to learn in a space designed to meet their needs. It may be that the pupil needs space to learn in a quieter environment, needs access to larger equipment to meet their sensory needs and/or require the provision, resources and space to learn in a more play-based way. The inclusion bases at Sacred Heart fulfil all these purposes. Provision will identify and reduce barriers associated with SEND, communication, cognition and learning, sensory or physical needs, social and emotional development, regulation, attendance or other identified additional needs.

Maintain high expectations

Pupils will have access to a broad, ambitious curriculum. Adaptations will remove barriers to learning rather than unnecessarily lower expectations. This directly reflects the DfE expectation that pupils accessing bases should continue to receive a broad and ambitious curriculum aligned with mainstream learning. The inclusion bases will be planned for by a teacher and learning opportunities be teacher led. For pupilren with an EHCP in place bespoke activities and provision set out to meet their specific objectives will be readily available in the bases.

Maximise successful participation in mainstream education

For pupils for whom it is appropriate, support will enable increasing participation in mainstream lessons. For pupils requiring longer-term access to the Base, provision will focus on ensuring meaningful participation in mainstream school life and maintaining strong links with classroom learning. It may be that pupilren access the inclusion hub regularly, daily, most sessions or that it is available if/when needed for all pupilren.

Develop independence

Intervention, provision and interactions within the inclusion bases will be designed to develop pupils' independence, communication, self-regulation, learning behaviours, social skills and confidence, rather than creating unnecessary dependence on adult support.

Principles

Our Inclusion Bases will operate according to the six principles identified by the DfE in 2026:

Supporting inclusion in the school through;

- High-quality curriculum design
- Effective data, assessment and outcomes
- Effective workforce and leadership
- Effective partnership working
- Inclusive and accessible physical environments

These principles will underpin planning, provision, staffing, assessment and evaluation.

Implementation

Who may access the Inclusion Base?

The Base may support pupils who have identified or emerging additional needs, including pupils with:

- special educational needs and disabilities;
- communication and interaction needs;
- cognition and learning needs;
- social, emotional and mental health needs;
- sensory or physical needs;
- significant regulation needs;
- attendance difficulties where these are linked to additional needs;
- needs associated with behaviour where specialist support is required;
- other needs identified through assessment and professional advice.

The Base will not be used simply because a pupil is performing below age-related expectations, has behaved inappropriately or requires a consequence. At Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School we are **explicit that access to an inclusion base for behavioural or pastoral support should never be used as a sanction or as a means of removing a pupil from the mainstream classroom.**

Entry criteria

Access to the Inclusion Base will normally follow the school's graduated approach:

Assess → Plan → Do → Review

If a pupil is accessing the inclusion bases for most of their learning opportunities and time in school the following criteria must apply;

- The pupil should have an EHCP/ EHCPA in progress.
- Additional support in lessons is always required to access learning appropriately.
- Tailored support in relation to core/ foundational skills may be needed.
- SEND needs are having an impact on learning.

-Core skills or reading, writing and/or maths are significantly impacting on the pupil's ability to access an age-related curriculum.

-Concerns over how a pupil will regulate in the mainstream classroom.

Placement will have clear entry criteria and, where appropriate, exit or transition criteria. This reflects the DfE's 2026 commissioning guidance, which identifies cohort profile, entry and exit criteria, staffing, curriculum, interventions and access to specialist professionals as important elements of an effective base

Individual provision plans

Each pupil accessing the Base will have clearly identified outcomes for that session, that day or that week.

These will be informed by assessment, EHCP documentation, BSquared and / or reports from professionals.

Targets children are working towards will be specific, measurable and reviewed regularly. Where an EHCP is in place, provision will be delivered in accordance with the statutory plan.

Curriculum

The Inclusion Base will provide a **broad, ambitious and appropriately adapted curriculum**. Pupils will not routinely receive a narrower or less ambitious curriculum simply because they access the Base. The children in the Base will access a range of subjects, via a normal school timetable, but this teaching and learning will be amended to ensure it fully meets the needs of each individual pupil.

Daily learning is carefully organised to ensure the pupils' needs can be fully met. All pupils who access an inclusion base are part of a mainstream class, which they have continual access to throughout the day.

Reading and Phonics

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School uses Bug Club phonics as their SSP. Depending on their age and stage of learning children will be taught phonics either with their peers with support, individually or in a small group as an intervention.

Writing

Ready Steady Write books are chosen to be core texts in both provision bases. A simplified learning sequence is followed which provides opportunities to immerse pupils in the world of a story, actively share vocabulary, develop pupil's imagination and confidence in the writing process. We use a book for two weeks, vocabulary is re-visited every day.

Week 1 will focus on meeting the characters

Week 2 will focus on shifting the narrative and making our own story

Each day there is a focus on mark making (writing) and making conversations.

Maths

Sacred Heart School uses Power Maths. These resources will be used in the inclusion bases but for the year group the child is working within. Time is taken in the Autumn term to

practically assess the children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. This then informs BSquared and the subsequent sequence of learning.

Sensory Circuits

Sensory circuits in the classroom are designed to help children regulate their sensory processing and improve their ability to focus and learn. They involve a sequence of altering, organising and calming activities. These typically should last 10-20 minutes and will take place at various times during the school day.

Afternoon Sessions – Including specialist interventions

It may be that for some afternoon sessions children re-join the mainstream class.

Where this isn't appropriate the afternoons are themed in the inclusion bases to support access to a broad curriculum. During this time additional interventions may take place such as:

- Fine motor skills
- Sensory play
- Turn taking activities
- BUSS Model work
- Speech and Language intervention

Where appropriate for the child history, geography, computing, science will be covered under the following themes. If the child is working within national curriculum then the whole school progression documents will apply for the planning of activities.

HT1 – Ourselves

HT2 – Festivals/ Light & Dark

HT3 – Transport

HT4 – Spring Time

HT5 – Animals

HT6 – Holidays/ weather

Mainstream participation

The Inclusion Base will operate along a continuum.

Depending on individual need, a pupil may:

- receive short targeted interventions in the Base;
- access a combination of mainstream and Base teaching;
- spend a greater proportion of time in the Base where this represents the most appropriate provision;
- gradually increase participation in mainstream lessons.

The DfE recommends prioritising movement towards mainstream classes while recognising that, for some pupils, long-term access to a bespoke learning area may be appropriate.

Decisions about time spent in the Base will therefore be **needs-led rather than convenience-led**.

Teaching and staffing

The Inclusion Base will be led by appropriately qualified and experienced staff, under the strategic leadership of the SENCO/Inclusion Lead.

The school will ensure that:

- teaching is teacher-led and appropriately supervised;
- staff receive relevant SEND and inclusion training;
- staff understand pupils' individual needs and provision plans;
- teaching assistants are deployed effectively;
- specialist advice is incorporated where appropriate;
- staff receive regular supervision and professional development.

The Base will support whole-school professional development by sharing effective strategies and specialist knowledge.

Environment

The Bases will provide a safe, calm, accessible and purposeful environment.

Where appropriate, the environment will include:

- low-distraction teaching spaces;
- flexible group and individual work areas;
- appropriate sensory resources;
- accessible furniture and resources;
- spaces for regulation;
- visual supports;
- accessible communication systems;
- opportunities for movement;
- opportunities for play led learning;
- appropriate technology and specialist equipment.

The Bases will remain visibly connected to the wider school community.

Relationships, behaviour and regulation

The Inclusion Bases will use relational, preventative and evidence-informed approaches in line with the whole school behaviour policy.

Staff will seek to understand the underlying needs and barriers associated with behaviour rather than treating behaviour solely as non-compliance.

The Bases will complement, not replace, the school's behaviour policy.

A pupil will not be placed in the Base as a punishment. Where a pupil requires a period away from the classroom for regulation or safety, this will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding, behaviour and risk-management procedures.

Attendance

The school will promote high attendance and recognise that unmet additional needs can be a barrier to attendance.

The Inclusion Bases may contribute to attendance improvement by:

- identifying barriers to attendance;
- providing predictable routines;
- supporting successful transitions;
- working with families;
- providing appropriate regulation and pastoral support;
- liaising with the school's attendance lead and relevant professionals.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding remains the responsibility of all staff.

The Inclusion Bases will operate within the school's safeguarding procedures and current statutory safeguarding guidance following the schools child protection and safeguarding policy

Partnership with parents and professionals

Parents and carers are important partners in the Inclusion Bases.

The school will:

- involve families in planning and reviewing provision;
- listen to pupil and parent/carers views;
- communicate regularly about progress;
- provide clear information about the purpose of Base access;
- work with external professionals where appropriate;
- support effective transitions.

Relevant professionals may include educational psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, specialist teachers, CAMHS or other health professionals, social care and local authority SEND services, subject to appropriate consent and information-sharing requirements.

Impact

The effectiveness of the Inclusion Base will be evaluated through a combination of quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Pupil outcomes

We will monitor:

- progress from individual baselines – using BSquared where appropriate;
- attainment and curriculum access;
- communication and interaction;
- independence;
- self-regulation;
- social and emotional development;
- engagement in learning;
- attendance;
- behaviour and incidents;
- participation in mainstream lessons;
- successful transitions;
- pupil voice.

Arbor, CPOMS, Tapestry and observations will all support the monitoring of outcomes for pupils who access the inclusion bases.

Inclusion outcomes

The school will evaluate whether the Base is strengthening inclusion across the whole school by considering:

- the proportion of Base pupils participating successfully in mainstream learning;
- increased independence;
- reduced barriers to classroom participation;
- successful reintegration where appropriate;
- attendance and engagement;
- reductions in avoidable exclusion or removal from learning;
- improved staff confidence;
- use of effective Base strategies in mainstream classrooms;
- pupil and parent/carer perceptions of belonging.

We will not judge the success of the Base solely by the number of pupils who leave it. For some pupils, sustained access to the Base may be the most appropriate long-term provision. Success will instead be defined by whether provision enables each pupil to make meaningful progress and participate successfully in school life.

Review cycle

Provision will be reviewed using the following cycle:

Baseline → Plan → Deliver → Monitor → Review → Adapt

Individual provision will be reviewed at least termly and more frequently where required. The overall effectiveness of the Inclusion Base will be reviewed annually by the SENCO/Inclusion Lead and reported to the Headteacher and governing body/trust board.

The review will consider:

1. Who is accessing the Base?
2. Why are they accessing it?
3. What provision are they receiving?
4. What progress are they making?
5. Is the provision evidence-informed?
6. Is mainstream participation being maximised appropriately?
7. Are pupils and families positive about the provision?
8. What impact is the Base having on whole-school inclusion?
9. What needs to change?

Governance and accountability

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Inclusion Base operates effectively.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- strategic oversight;
- quality assurance;
- staff development;
- provision planning;
- assessment and review;
- partnership working;
- reporting impact.

The teacher in Wharfe class is responsible for day-to-day provision and ensuring that agreed individual plans are implemented in base 1 and the teacher in Wheatley class the same for base 2.

Governors/trustees will provide appropriate challenge and oversight through the school's SEND and inclusion monitoring arrangements.

Equality, dignity and pupil voice

All pupils accessing the Inclusion Base will be treated with dignity and respect.

The school will have regard to the Equality Act 2010 and its duties relating to disability discrimination and reasonable adjustments.

Pupils will be encouraged to express their views about:

- what helps them learn;
- what makes them feel safe;
- their preferred ways of communicating;
- their experiences of the Base;
- their aspirations and goals;
- changes they would like to see.

Pupil voice will inform provision wherever reasonably possible and used at annual reviews for children with EHCPs.

Success criteria

The Inclusion Base will be considered effective when:

- pupils make measurable progress from their individual starting points;
- pupils experience a strong sense of belonging;
- pupils access an ambitious curriculum;
- barriers to learning are reduced;
- pupils develop greater independence;
- mainstream participation is maximised appropriately;
- attendance and engagement improve where these are identified outcomes;
- families report confidence in the provision;
- staff confidence and inclusive practice improve across the school;
- specialist knowledge is shared beyond the Base;
- provision is regularly evaluated and adapted in response to evidence.

Evidence base and key DfE documents

This policy has been developed with reference to the following DfE publications available in 2026:

- **Department for Education, *Inclusion bases in schools guidance*, June 2026 –**
- **Department for Education, *Every child achieving and thriving*, February 2026 –**
- **Department for Education, *Inclusive mainstream fund for schools: methodology 2026 to 2027* –**
- **Department for Education, *Working together to improve school attendance*,**
- **Department for Education, *Keeping children safe in education 2026* –**
- **Department for Education, *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, March 2026**

This policy should be read alongside the school's statutory duties, The school SEND information report, safeguarding policy, behaviour policy, attendance policy, teaching and learning policy, accessibility arrangements, equality policy and any relevant EHCP requirements.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there are significant changes to:

- DfE guidance;
- SEND legislation or regulations;
- safeguarding requirements;
- local authority arrangements;
- the school's Inclusion Base model;
- the needs of the pupil cohort.

Next review: [Insert date]