

**The Federation of St Mary's Catholic Schools**



**St Mary's  
SEND Information Report  
2023-2024**

**The Federation of St Mary's Catholic Schools  
Local Offer**

**September 2023**

**Parent/ Carer information for children who have additional needs**

This Report is in the context of Schedule 1 Regulation 51 of the SEND Regulations 2014 and the Code of Practice 2014 and Equalities Act 2010.

**At The Federation of St. Mary's, we strive to support all children to enable them to achieve at school.**

**Our school values of respect, resilience and compassion underpin all of our curriculum. We aim to ensure that our curriculum is accessible to all children, including those with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.**

**In order to ensure all children achieve, many steps are taken to support them through their learning journey. Quality first teaching is vital; however, for some children there are occasions when further positive support may be needed to help them to achieve their targets.**

The following information is to inform you of the type of support available at The Federation of St Mary's Catholic Schools.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **How are Special Needs defined?**

At St Mary's, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities. All pupils have a right to a broad and balanced curriculum including the National Curriculum and we shall strive to give children with special educational needs access to a relevant curriculum that demonstrates progression and coherence. All pupils can learn and make progress, if only in small steps. Not all pupils with disabilities have special educational needs and not all pupils with SEND meet the definition of disability, however, our policy covers all of these pupils.

#### **Definition of SEND**

"Pupils have Special Educational Needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made." A pupil has a learning difficulty if he/she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same chronological age. "Pupils with a disability have special educational needs if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them, that is anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in schools in the area."

#### **How will St Mary's know if my child needs extra help?**

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, teachers or the child
- Limited progress is being made
- There is a change in the pupil's behaviour or progress
- Information from previous settings to aid transition

#### **Who is the best person to talk about my child's difficulties with learning / SEND?**

If you have any concerns about your child, please contact the class teacher: you don't have to wait until a 'parents evening'. At St Mary's, the class teacher (and/or Teaching Assistant) meet regularly with the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator - Mrs Nicola Follin) to review the needs and progress of the all the children on the SEND list. The class teacher will also feedback any concerns that a parent may have to the SENCo who is very happy to meet parents.

The class teacher is the initial point of contact for responding to parental concerns. If you then have concerns, contact the SENCos. Mrs Follin can be contacted at the Junior School: 01744 678603; or the Infant School: 01744 678357.

### **How will I know how St Mary's will support my child?**

The level of support your child receives will depend on their needs. The SENCo offers meetings to all parents of children receiving additional support. At this meeting, we will discuss the support your child has received in the current term and whether they will need continued support in the following terms. At St Mary's, we have teaching assistants (TAs) working within the class to support children. The class teachers, SENCo and TAs will review children's progress, including which children are in intervention groups, every term.

Each pupil's education programme will be planned by the class teacher. It will be adapted to suit the pupil's individual needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or TA in class or access to specific equipment and resources.

If a pupil has needs related to more specific areas of their education, such as spelling, handwriting, maths and English etc. then the pupil will be placed in a small focus intervention group. This will be run by the teacher or TA. The length of time of the intervention will vary according to need but will generally be for a term. The interventions will be regularly reviewed by all involved to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning. These interventions are recorded with entry and exit points and the voice of the pupil is also taken into consideration. If you have any queries related to the interventions, please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or SENCo.

Occasionally, a pupil may need more expert support from an outside agency such as the Behaviour Improvement Team, Learning Support Service etc. A referral will usually be made through TESSA (Triage for all Education Support and Specialist Advice) with your consent and forwarded to the most appropriate agency. After a series of assessments, a programme of support is usually provided to the school and parents/carers.

### **How will the curriculum be matched to meet my child's needs?**

- Our curriculum is fully inclusive, regardless of children's backgrounds and needs, and we will ensure they receive their full curriculum entitlement.
- Class Teachers plan lessons according to the specific needs of all groups of children in their class and will ensure that your child's needs are met.
- Teaching Assistants may be allocated to work with small focus/intervention groups.
- Specially trained support staff can adapt the teachers' planning to support the needs of your child where necessary.
- Specific resources and strategies will be used to support your child individually and in groups.
- Planning and teaching will be adapted on a daily basis if needed to meet your child's learning needs.
- Pupil profiles provided to highlight targets and resources for children at SEN Support.

### **How will I know how my child is doing?**

Your child's progress is continually monitored by the class teacher.

Your child's class teacher will be available at the end of each day if you wish to raise a concern. Appointments can be made to speak in more detail to the class teacher or SENCo by visiting or phoning the school office.

You will be able to discuss your child's progress at Parents' Evenings.

Children at SEN Support, Enhanced SEN Support and EHC Plan (Education and Health Care Plan) will have a Pupil Profile and SEN support plan which will be reviewed with your involvement, every term and the plan for the next term made.

The progress of children with Enhanced SEN Support or an EHC Plan is formally reviewed at an Annual Review with all adults (and the child themselves) involved with the child's education.

## **How will St Mary's help me to support my child's learning?**

- The class teacher may suggest ways of how you can support your child through specific home activities.
- The class teacher may meet with you to discuss how to support your child with strategies to use if there are difficulties with your child's behaviour/emotional needs. Our Safeguarding and Pastoral Lead may also have involvement in these cases.
- If outside agencies have been involved, suggestions and programmes of study are normally provided that can be used at home

## **What support will be available for my child's overall well-being?**

At St Mary's, a child's wellbeing is supported at different levels and in many ways. At a whole school we use a variety of techniques such as Class Dojo, RSHE, Rainbows and Desty Island.

The school offers a variety of pastoral support for pupils who are encountering emotional and behavioural difficulties. These include:

- 1:1 mentoring with a teaching assistant
- Discussion/referral to Pastoral Lead
- Circle time
- Discussion with class teacher and/or SENCo and/or Head of School regarding strategies to improve behaviour
- Behaviour targets identified, recorded as a Pupil Profile and reviewed termly
- Staff are trained in Team Teach and are able to use positive handling.
- Referral to BIT (Behaviour Improvement Team)

Medical needs:

- If a pupil has a medical need, then a detailed care plan is compiled with support from the school nurse in consultation with parents/carers. These are discussed with all staff who are involved with the pupil.
- Staff receive allergy awareness training (including the emergency use of an epipen) and asthma awareness training delivered by the Community Healthcare Team.
- Where necessary and in agreement with parents/carers, medicines are administered in school but only where a signed medication consent form is in place to ensure the safety of both child and staff member. This is inline with our Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions Policy.
- Designated staff have basic first aid training and/or paediatric first aid training.

## **What happens if my child has a high level of need?**

We work closely with parents and the school inclusion officer from the local authority to assess specific needs and future provision.

## **What specialist services and expertise are available to St Mary's?**

At times it may be necessary to consult with outside agencies to receive their more specialised expertise.

The agencies used by the school include:

- The Bridge Centre
- LASC (Language & Social Communication Teams)
- Educational Psychology Service
- CDS (Children's Disability Service)
- Visual or Hearing Impairment Team
- Speech and Language Therapy (provided by Health)
- LSS (Learning Support Service)

- BIT (Behaviour Improvement Team)
- School Nurse
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Support Team)
- Social Services
- Early Intervention Team

These are the main specialists we work with, but we are also sign-posted to others by them.

### **Are the staff who support children with SEND in this school provided with appropriate training?**

- The SENCo's job is to support the class teacher in planning for children with SEND. Mrs Follin holds the The National Award SENCo (NASENCO), a statutory award for newly appointed SENCOs in maintained schools.
- Individual teachers and support staff attend training courses run by outside agencies that are relevant to the needs of specific children in their class e.g from LASC, BIT.
- Whole school training (such as Autism awareness and Team teach) is accessed when appropriate.

### **How will my child be included in activities outside of the classroom, including school trips?**

Activities and school trips are available to all. All school trips require a risk assessment. For children with significant needs, they may require an individual risk assessment involving parents to ensure that they are able to take part in the trip successfully. However, if it is deemed that an intensive level of 1:1 support is required a parent or carer may be asked to accompany their child during the activity.

### **How accessible is the school environment?**

- The building is accessible to those with physical disabilities.
- There are toilets suitable for disabled access at both schools and a wet room at the Infant School.
- We ensure that equipment used is accessible to all children regardless of their needs.
- Extra-curricular activities are accessible for children with SEND.
- Although dogs are exempt from school, Guide Dogs are welcomed.
- Accommodating children with needs is carefully considered each year when children move classes.

### **How will St Mary's prepare and support my child when they are starting, leaving this school or moving to another year?**

If your child is moving to another school:

- We will contact the school SENCo and arrange a transition process to ensure he/she knows about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child.
- We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible.

When moving classes in school:

- Information will be passed on to the new class teacher in advance at our staff transition meetings.
- All Pupil Profiles will be shared with the new teacher.
- If your child would be helped by a book to support them understand moving on, then it will be made for them.

In Year 2 / Year 6:

- A transition meeting will be arranged which will include relevant staff from the Infant for Year 2 children or Junior school for Year 6 children, depending, SENCo from the secondary and parents.
- Your child will do focused learning about aspects of transition to support their understanding of the changes ahead.

- Where possible your child will visit their new school on several occasions

### **What if my child needs transport to and from school?**

Parents and carers are expected to provide their own transport to and from school. Transport is only available to those attending a specialist provision in the Local Authority.

### **How are St Mary's resources allocated and matched to the children's special educational needs?**

- The school budget, received from St Helens LA, includes money for supporting children with SEND.
- The Executive Head Teacher reviews the budget for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in consultation with the school governors and their approval, on the basis of needs in the school.
- The Executive Head Teacher and the SENCo discuss all the information they have about SEND in the school, including:
  - the children getting extra support already
  - the children needing extra support
  - the children who have been identified as not making as much progress as would be expected. A decision is then made about what resources/training and support is needed. All resources/training and support are reviewed regularly and changes made as needed.
- If deemed necessary, school may apply for Enhanced SEN support funding through St Helens Provision Agreement Panel. Parents will be fully involved in this process.

### **How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?**

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan or if your child is at Enhanced SEN Support, it will specify how much support time your child will need. If not, then the time and type of support given to your child will be reviewed at least termly, by the class teacher and you will have the opportunity to discuss this at the termly meetings. If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan, we will also arrange Annual Review meetings with you, to ensure that the plan is still appropriate for your child and make any changes.

These decisions are made in consultation with class teacher and Senior Leadership Team. Decisions are based upon termly tracking of pupil progress and as a result of assessments by outside agencies.

### **How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?**

At St Mary's, we understand that you have a valuable understanding of your child's needs and wishes. We aim to involve you in every decision-making process. We encourage you to meet with us as often as you feel necessary.

All parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's education.

This may be through:

- discussions with the class teacher
- during parents' evenings
- during discussions with SENCo or other professionals
- parents are encouraged to comment on their child's Pupil Profile with possible suggestions that could be incorporated.

### **Who can I contact for further information?**

At St Mary's, your first point of contact is always the class teacher. If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan, the SENCo will oversee the implementation of the plan in school. If you wish to discuss your child's educational needs or are unhappy about something regarding your child's schooling please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the SENCo.

Mrs Follin can be contacted at the Junior School: 01744 678603; or the Infant School: 01744 678357.

### **Where can I find out about St Helens Local Offer?**

Information about St Helens Local Offer is published at <https://new.sthelens.gov.uk/SEND>

Here you will find all that St Helens Local Authority provides in regards to Special Educational Needs.

### **How do we handle complaints?**

Any complaints should be addressed in writing to the Executive Headteacher, Mrs J Kellett or to our Chair of Governors, Mrs V Wells, if the complaint is about the Executive Headteacher.