

The Local Offer

Parent/ Carer information for children who have additional needs

Our aspiration is to help your child achieve the very best they can at school. The following information is to inform you of the type of support available at St Mary's Catholic Infant and Junior School.

Frequently asked questions

At St Mary's we strive to support **all** children to enable them to achieve at school. In order to do this many steps are taken to support them through their learning journey. Quality teaching is vital; however for some children there are occasions when further additional support may be needed to help them achieve their targets.

1. 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 and differentiated 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 SEN meet the definition of disability, however, our policy covers all of these pupils.

Definition of SEN

"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."

2. How will the school 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

3. Who is the best person to talk about my child's difficulties with learning / SEN?

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 LSA (Learning Support Assistant) has a termly meeting, known as planning meetings, with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs CoOrdinator) to review the needs and progress of the all the children on the SEN register. They also meet informally throughout the term. 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 have concerns then contact Mrs Byrne (Infant School) or Mrs Dean (Junior School) who are the SENCO's

4. How will I know how the school 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 terms and whether they will need continued support in the following terms. At St Mary's we have LSA's working within the class to support children. The Class teachers and SENCO will review children's progress, which children are in intervention groups, every half term against targets set.

Each pupil's education programme will be planned by the class teacher. It will be differentiated accordingly to suit the pupil's individual needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or LSA in class.

If a pupil has needs related to more specific areas of their education, such as spelling, handwriting, numeracy & literacy skills etc. then the pupil will be placed in a small focus group. This will be run by the teacher or LSA. 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 will be recorded on the class provision map (this is a record of the interventions, timings, cost and impact of the intervention). If you have any queries related to the interventions please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or SENCO.

Pupil Progress Meetings are held each term. This is a meeting where the class teacher meets with the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the progress of the pupils in their class. This shared discussion may highlight any potential problems in order for further support to be planned.

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 be made, 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.

5. How will the curriculum be matched to meet my child's needs?

- 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.
- LSAs may be allocated to work with small focus 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.
- IEP (Individual Educational Plan) or equivalent under the new code of practice, provided to highlight targets and resources for children at School Action plus.

6. 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 the school office.

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

Children at school concern, Enhanced School Action Plus and Statement / EHC Plan (Education and Health Care Plan) will have an IEP which will be reviewed with your involvement, every term and the plan for the next term made.

The progress of children with Enhanced School Action Plus or a Statement of SEND/ EHC Plan is formally reviewed at an Annual Review with all adults involved with the child's education.

7. How will the school help me to support my child's learning?

- The class teacher may suggest ways of how you can support your child through differentiated 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.
- If outside agencies or the Educational Psychologist have been involved, suggestions and programmes of study are normally provided that can be used at home

8. 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 Good to be Green, Smilies, PSHE/SEAL, Curriculum enrichment, Rainbows & Sunbeams.

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

- 1:1 mentoring with Mr Campbell
- Circle time
- Happy to be me programme for lower Juniors
- Discussion with class teacher and/or SENCO regarding strategies to improve behaviour
- Behaviour targets identified, recorded as an IBP (Individual Behaviour Plan) and reviewed termly
- All 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 annually, 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.
- Designated staff have basic first aid training and/or paediatric first aid training

9. 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.

10. What specialist services and expertise are available to this school?

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

The agencies used by the school include:

- LASC (Language & Social Communication Teams)
- Educational Psychology Service
- CDS (Children's Disability Service)
- Sensory Service for children with visual or hearing needs
- 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 specialist we work with, but we are also sign-posted to others by them.

11. 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.
- 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.

12. 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.

13. 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 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.

14. How will this school 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 and in most cases, a planning meeting will take place with the new teacher.
- All IEPs 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

15. 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.

16. How are the school'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.

17. 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 School Action Plus, 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, SENCO 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.

18. 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 IEP with possible suggestions that could be incorporated.

19. 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 SENCOs.