

## St Mary's Primary Church of England Academy

### Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) information report September 2017

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## Teaching and Learning

### *Inclusive classrooms*

St Mary's is an inclusive school and we always endeavour to do our best for all of our children. All of our teachers are teachers of children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND). They all follow the school's SEND policy and know about ways in which their classroom organisation and their teaching may need to be adjusted to accommodate children with a range of SENDs.

The SEN Code of Practice (2015) is the legal document which describes how schools should support children with SEN. According to that document:

*A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age*

Some children may have a disability, a diagnosis of ASD, a sensory difficulty or a medical problem but these children are not included on the SEND register unless this difficulty or disability has a significant and long term impact upon the child's ability to learn. Where children need a specific provision in the classroom, such as the use of a sound field system for a hearing impairment, but are able to work at an age appropriate level they will be registered on the additional needs register. Children who are registered on either the SEND register or the Additional needs register have a student passport which details the support that is required to be in place in the classroom. Children on the SEND register have an Individual Record of Support (ISR). ISR documents detail the areas of difficulty for the students as well as the provision that is in place to support the student. ISR documents and pupil progress are reviewed with parents and teaching staff on a termly basis.

### *Bullying of children with SEND*

As a school, we have a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying of any nature (see our anti-bullying policy). We recognise that bullying of children with SEND is particularly sensitive, especially when the children either are not aware they are being bullied or they struggle to communicate their experiences. The playground and school are always patrolled during playtimes and lunchtimes and members of staff -often the class teachers and members of the senior leadership team- are always available to listen and intervene where there is any suggestion of bullying.

We teach children that bullying is everyone's responsibility and encourage them to come forwards if they think another child is being bullied. We will also investigate complaints of bullying from parents.

In the year 2016-2017, we had 7 complaints of bullying of children with SEND, all of which were investigated thoroughly.

### *Identifying children with SEN and assessing their needs*

Our schools SEND Policy can be accessed at [www.smpsac.org](http://www.smpsac.org) . It states in our policy that children, parents, class teachers and teaching assistants are all involved in identifying children's learning needs. All teachers regularly talk to the parents of the children they teach and keep them informed about any concerns. Concerns may also be raised at termly pupil progress meetings when teachers and senior leaders sit together and identify children whose progress is below that expected.

Initially, the teacher will use their knowledge of the child to change something about the child's learning opportunities in order to see whether the child begins to make better progress. Often, this will solve the problem. This includes for example:

- Changing seating arrangements
- Printing learning objectives
- Providing table-top resources which help the child
- Giving the child a visual timetable or communication cards

Some children, however, need something which is '*different from or additional to*' the opportunities offered to all children in the class. These children are often identified by parents or by school staff who know how the child works, interacts and engages with learning. Alternatively, they are highlighted when poor progress is noted. With their parents' permission, these children are discussed with the SENCO. If the SENCO and teacher together think that they think there is an additional need, the parent is invited to a meeting and together we agree whether or not to put the child on the SEN register.

Most children on the SEN register are accommodated at 'SEN Support' (SENS). These children have targets which they are supported in meeting. The support may take the form of

- an intervention,
- additional adult support,
- access to ICT or
- some change to their environment

The support is individual to the child in order to help them to meet their targets. There is a termly meeting to discuss progress with parents. This support is documented on an Individual Record of Support (ISR).

A very small number of children will be referred for assessment for an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). These have replaced statements. Most of these children are likely to be referred to either a specialist school or a specialist support team at some point during their education. Children with EHCPs have a record of support and a termly meeting to discuss progress in the same ways as children on SENS.

More information on SENS and EHCPs can be found at the Schools' Offer which answers over 300 questions put by parents.



### *Profile of SEN 2016-2017*

During the academic year 2016-2017 we had 27 children on our Special Educational Needs (SEN) register which was around 6.5 % of our school population. Nationally, around 15% children are currently identified with SEN (source- SEN analysis: A summary of data sources updated May 2016). In our school, 5 children have Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) or statements and drafts are being produced at County level for a further 4 children. We had 9 children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder who were supported by the County Inclusive support team. The support given ranges from fortnightly consultations for a child with an EHCP to targeted support around areas such transition. Each child's support is arranged in consultation with the SENCO. The types of

special need our children have, listed under the broad categories of SEN as defined in the 2014 Code of Practice, include:

- *Communication and interaction*: autism, speech and language difficulties
- *Cognition and learning*: dyslexia, global delay and moderate learning difficulties
- *Social, emotional and mental health*: challenging behaviour linked to social and emotional difficulties, attachment difficulties
- *Physical & Sensory*: visual processing difficulties; auditory processing difficulties

Over the last two years it has become recognised that we have increasing challenges accessing sufficient support for students with speech and language difficulties. Over 40% of the children in our Early years cohort were assessed as below age expectation for language skills when they joined the school. As a hub the decision was taken to buy in an independent SALT specialist to work with the children and provide ongoing guidance for the staff to support speech development. The specialist is now in place and ensuring that we give the highest possible level of language support to our youngsters. The specialist provides individual programmes for each student, these are delivered by ELKLAN trained staff, and assesses progress on a termly basis. We have 6 fulltime members of staff that are ELKLAN trained to a level 3 and have a structured training programme in progress to ensure that all our Early Years staff are trained to deliver structured support through the ELKLAN 3-5 years language programme. Early years and Key stage 1 support staff have also had training in using Makaton signing as a support for the students with the greatest language difficulties.

### *Working with children who are looked after by the local authority*

In 2016-2017, we had 6 children who are in the care of a local authority in school. These children have full access to the same processes and support as all other children. The staff member in charge of reviewing the progress of Children in Care, (CIC), is the SENCO Lesley Osborne. All CIC students have termly reviews which include all aspects of their care and education. These reviews are carried out with children, carers and teaching staff present. Moving forward to 2017-18 we have 4 children in care on role and a further 8 children who are now in permanent placements following a period in care. All of these children are identified to staff as students of special concern whose progress and wellbeing are monitored closely.

### *Adaptations to the curriculum*

Children with SEN need provision which is 'different from and additional to' their peers. Most of this provision is through the class teacher planning different work for the child. This is known as differentiation. Differentiation can refer to

- allowing access to additional resources,
- doing different activities or
- doing the same activity as others but with additional support.

All teachers plan in this way for the whole class and consider the needs of their SEN pupils when identifying the best pathways through learning. This inclusive teaching is called Quality First Wave

teaching. Teachers are supported in their differentiation for individual children by the information provided on the Pupil Passport.

In addition, whole school strategic planning supports children with SEN. This is laid out in more detail in the school's accessibility plan (see [www.smpsac.org](http://www.smpsac.org)).

### *Looking after children's social and emotional well-being*

We recognise that children's mental health and emotional state impact significantly on their ability to concentrate and make progress in school. Social and emotional difficulties are often communicated through angry, aggressive, hard to manage behaviours, through self-harming or through withdrawn, introverted behaviours. In 2016-17 the SENCO completed training on Mental Health first aid in schools. This training is funded by the Department of Health and organised through Mental Health first aid England, (see [mhfaengland.org](http://mhfaengland.org) for more information). The aim of the programme is to raise the profile of supporting mental health to the same level as the support for physical health. The programme gives guidance on recognising and dealing with students with anxieties or low emotional resilience and 'low level' mental health issues as well as giving guidance on how to ensure that individuals with long term issues with mental health and wellbeing are supported adequately and effectively.

St Mary's is part of the Nurture Schools Network, and is working towards gaining a nationally recognised Nurturing School Award. Nurture work is based in the principles of attachment theory and has its basis in sociological research. The six principles of Nurture run throughout the policies of St Mary's Academy and are reflected in all our interactions with children.

The six principles of Nurture are:

- Children's learning is understood developmentally
- The classroom offers a safe base
- The importance of nurture for the development of wellbeing
- Language is a vital means of communication
- All behaviour is communication
- The importance of transition in children's lives

Ref: Lucas,S., Insley,K. and Buckland,G. (2006) Nurture Group Principles and Curriculum Guidelines Helping Children to Achieve, The Nurture Group Network.

For more information regarding the Nurture Schools Network please see [www.nurturegroups.org](http://www.nurturegroups.org).

All teachers are very aware of the social and emotional needs of the children in their classes and make adaptations to accommodate individual needs. This might be by having additional access to the teacher or a familiar teaching assistant, through a social skills intervention such as Lego Therapy, Drawing for talking sessions, through individual reward systems, meet and greet, break cards or another intervention that meets the child's individual needs.

Throughout the school year we offer Art Nurture intervention sessions with Mrs Torbitt and Talk Nurture sessions with Mrs Fincham for our students. Our nurture intervention sessions take place on a weekly basis and are directly linked to the Nurture Schools Network programmes. Small groups of children are given the opportunity to be creative and develop their social skills and interpersonal skill levels in a safe environment away from the pressures of the classroom. These sessions are especially

useful to support children with low confidence levels or who need an opportunity to reflect on their efforts and successes. Many children who are managing a period of change, such as a new family member or significant illness, have found these sessions to be both enjoyable and uplifting. In 2016-17 Mrs Torbitt worked with over 40 children in her 8 Art Nurture groups, ranging from year 2 to year 6. Mrs Fincham worked with 26 children in her 4 Talk Nurture sessions, ranging from Early Years to year 4 students. Students are selected to attend one of these groups in liaison with parents and teachers on a termly basis. We celebrate the creativity of these groups as part of our celebration assemblies. Teachers and children are encouraged to give feedback to both Mrs Torbitt and Mrs Fincham through questionnaires at the end of a termly project. Small group interventions such as these are very important in ensuring that we are able to best support some of the students for whom school is emotionally challenging and often exhausting.

The school employs two Family Support Workers, (FSW), who are available to talk to parents on an informal basis and offer support and guidance. They also offer support through family difficulties that affect students. The FSW's can also support on an individual basis with some children, offering therapeutic activities to help students to understand their own emotions.

If the work we do in school proves not to be effective, we can engage outside services or refer to a pupil referral unit (PRU) or, through the GP, school nurse or local primary mental health team, to the Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

### *Evaluating the effectiveness of our work with children*

All of the work we do with our children is carefully monitored. Overall progress is discussed at termly pupil progress meetings and any causes for concern are highlighted. In addition, all staff are asked to complete intervention monitoring sheets which record the progress made by individual pupils and allow us to decide whether the intervention is effective or not. Ineffective interventions are stopped.

Overall, children with SEND made as much progress as other children in their cohort. Children with statements/ EHCP made additional progress in reading and maths but many of those on SENS made additional progress in writing as well. All of the children made some progress against their prior attainment in each of the skill areas.

### *Evaluating the effectiveness of provision*

The Principal and SEN Governor support the SENCO in constantly evaluating and improving our SEND provision. We review the progress made by all children with SEND, then look more closely at the progress made by groups of children in the same year group or with similar needs. This enables us to ensure that we target provision appropriately. In addition, the SENCO makes an annual report to the school's governing body during which all governors have the opportunity to ask questions about overall provision and its effectiveness.

### *Access to extra-curricular activities*

The school offers a range of extra-curricular activities, both during and after school. Children on the SEN register are actively encouraged to attend clubs which enable them to learn new skills and to develop confidence. We are pleased at the number of children who have at least tried to participate in extra-curricular activities.

## Working with parents and children

### *Working with Children*

The school operates a Person-Centred approach to involving children in their education. All children complete an annual One Page Profile which enables them to record information about what is important to them as well as recognising their strengths and weaknesses. Where appropriate, this information is supported by a teacher.

All children in the school, including those with SEN, have targets which they work towards and the school marking policy explains how teachers give children feedback to help them to move towards their targets.

Children with SEN are invited annually to complete a short questionnaire in order to capture a snapshot of children's views about learning, friendships, opportunities to access extra-curricular activities and their feelings of being safe in school. These are collated and considered, alongside the parent questionnaires, when we draw up the next SEN action plan.

As part of their one page plan profile, children are asked to think about their futures, although we know these are likely to change. We want all of our children to have aspirations and to plan for possible futures. If we know about children's hopes and dreams, we can sometimes direct them towards local opportunities for developing their skills and interests.

### *Working with Parents*

All of the children who are identified as SEN have an Individual Record of Support which is updated termly during a meeting with parents and, where appropriate, the child. At the meeting, the child's progress towards their targets is discussed and the parent is involved in deciding what the next steps might be and what kind of support will be necessary for the child to achieve these outcomes. In addition, parents are invited to share their views on the school's provision via an annual questionnaire and some face to face meetings.



A group of parents worked with the SENCO to participate in the creation and updating of our Schools' Offer which can be accessed here or from our website. This document was produced in collaboration with local schools who are members of the Mildenhall SEN HUB.

### *Working with Families*

It is much harder now for families to seek face to face help with supporting their children. The national cuts in funding to Local Authorities have meant that the threshold for engagement with services that support families has risen dramatically. We have two Family Support Workers (FSW) working at the school who can help with early intervention, give good advice or sometimes just be a friendly, non-judgemental listener who is happy to sit and chat with a cup of tea. We are investing in supporting and training for this role.

Although there is not necessarily any link between the families who link to a FSW and SEN, the FSW's are knowledgeable about SEN and sympathetic to the additional stresses on a family when a child has additional or special needs. They receive regular training to make sure that they are fully up-to-date on how to contact support services and the services that maybe appropriate and available.

Please contact your child's class teacher or reception to make an appointment to talk to our FSW's, Mrs Goodall or Mrs Fairhead-Andrews

## **SEN administration**

### *Transition arrangements*

Transition into our school, from our school and from class to class is given careful and individual consideration. Most children manage their transitions well as part of the whole class transition arrangements. However, we need to do additional planning and preparation for some of our children who become anxious when faced by change. This might include additional visits, taking photographs, doing work about what can look forward to in the new class or school, addressing concerns etc.

### *Involving outside agencies*

Outside agencies the school worked with during the year were mostly from Suffolk County Council or the local health authority: Educational Psychologists, County Inclusion Support Services, County Specialist SEN team, Speech and Language Therapist, Physiotherapists and Occupational therapists as well as the School Nursing service. We also have access to a privately employed play therapist and counsellor on a weekly basis. The SEN HUB employs a part time speech therapist who visits St Mary's on a fortnightly basis.

The school is a member of the Mildenhall SEN hub which is a collaboration of 15 local primary and secondary schools working together to support children with SEN. We benefit from sharing information and resources, networking meetings, annual conferences and the support of the Hub coordinator.

### *Training and expertise of staff*

All of our teachers are teachers of children with SEND and have a broad understanding of the needs of children with SEND. All of the staff have received training for working with children with dyslexia and creating a dyslexia- friendly learning environment. All staff have also received training on working with children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder Children by the County Inclusion Support Service. Many key staff have also had training in specific aspects of Nurture provision.

The role of the SENCO is to provide additional information and support to enhance teachers' knowledge and expertise. In addition the staff have access to an extensive library of information books and, where applicable, teachers are directed to websites which are particularly useful for information about different SEND. If necessary, we can call on additional services to support our work with the children.

The school is a member of the Mildenhall SEN HUB which is a partnership of local schools who share ideas, expertise and resources. Training for teachers and TAs is often available through the SEN HUB. The HUB is often able to secure specialist expertise, particularly if more than one school can benefit from training.

## *Funding*

St Mary's Primary Church of England Academy receives funding from the Department for Education, some of which is intended to support children with SEN. For children who have particularly high levels of need and support, we apply for top-up funding (High Tariff Needs Funding) from Suffolk. In 2016-2017 we received £18,422 of this funding which was used primarily to employ additional teaching assistants to work with these high level need children.

## ***The School's Facilities to support children with SEND***

The school is compliant with the demands of the Equalities Act and the Disability Discrimination Act. This means that all areas of the school are equally accessible to all children. The exception to this is that some classrooms do not have exterior ramps to accommodate wheelchairs. Risk assessments are routinely completed for all our children with additional mobility needs and, where necessary, modifications to the school are made. If necessary, the school is often able to secure funding for new or specialist equipment as recommended by a medical professional.

Where appropriate, adults are trained for manual handling to ensure that they know how to support and help children in a manner which keeps both the adults and the child safe.

The school has a large disabled toilet which includes a bed for changing children.

The school has quiet outbreak areas which can be used by children to relax, to calm down or for specific sensory interventions.

The school has a family room for training and meetings with families.

## *Complaints Policy*

We work hard to support all of our children, but sometimes parents have concerns which they don't feel area addressed. If you have any complaints, please follow the complaints policy as outlined on our website, but can be summarised as follows:

- Step 1: informal discussion with class teacher or head of year
- Step 2: informal meeting with Head teacher
- Step 3: formal written complaint to Head teacher
- Step 4: referral to governing body or the local authority

## *Strategic management*

Below is a list of people in the school who are particularly concerned with the organisation of SEN in the school. They can all be contacted via the school office:

SEN governor: Rev. John Cox

SENCO: Ms. Lesley Osborne

Principal: Mr. Colin Haley

The way in which we identify and work with our SEN children is clearly explained in our SEN policy. In addition, the school has worked with Mildenhall SEN hub to create an extensive library of questions and answers about SEN. The questions were asked by parents of member schools. You can access the School's Offer at:



The school forms part of Suffolk's local offer which can be accessed at

