



SEND Information Report - September 2023



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Inclusive Classrooms

As a Christian school St Mary's is a fully inclusive school and we always endeavour to do our best for all of our children. We are committed to welcoming children of all abilities into our community and helping them reach their full potential through a wide and varied curriculum and individual support programmes where needed. 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 individually tailored to accommodate children with a wide range of additional needs and disabilities.

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 additional needs, a developmental difficulty, a sight or hearing impairment or a medical issue which has a significant and long term impact upon the child's ability to learn and the school is required to provide support above and beyond the level required by the "average" child. These are the children registered on the SEND register. 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 SEND register. All children who are registered on the SEND register have a student passport which details the support that is required to be in place in the classroom. Children on the SEND register may also 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 and enable them to develop their learning towards age appropriate levels. ISR documents and pupil progress are reviewed with parents and teaching staff on a termly basis. Since September 2021 we have recorded ISR information in the Provision Mapping database.

Bullying of children with SEND

As a school, we have a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying of any nature (see our Behaviour and Relationships policy). We recognise that bullying of children with SEND is particularly sensitive, especially when the children may not be aware they are being bullied or they struggle to communicate their experiences. The playground and school are always patrolled during play-times and lunch-times 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 preventing bullying and unkind behaviour is everyone's responsibility and encourage them to come forward if they think another child is being bullied. We will also investigate complaints of bullying from parents. In the year 2022-23 we had several individual reports of bullying involving SEND children. These incidents were thoroughly investigated and school staff liaised with parents to ensure that the incidents were resolved satisfactorily.



Identifying children with SEN and Assessing their Needs

Our schools SEND Policy can be accessed at 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 action 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 might include:

- 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 SENDCo. If the SENDCo and teacher together think that 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 SEND register.

Most children on the SEND register are accommodated at 'SEND Support'. 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, national statistics suggest 2% of all school age 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 an individual record of support and a termly meeting to discuss progress in the same ways as children on SEND Support.

More information on SEND Support and EHCPs can be found at the Suffolk Local Offer information service, infolink, which answers over 300 questions put by parents.

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/localoffer.page?localofferchannel=0>



Profile of SEND for 2022-2023

At the end of the year 2022-2023 we had 26% of students registered on the SEND register. We were fortunate to have the successful placement of 2 students with Education Health Care plans, EHCP, into specialist settings during the year 2022- 2023 and a further 4 students with Education Health Care plans leaving the school for new settings in July 2023.

At the start of September 2023 we will have 15 students with a finalised Education and Health Care plan, EHCP, in place and 5 more Education Health Care Plans being drafted by Suffolk Family Services to be completed in the Autumn term of 2023. This will bring us to 20 EHCP in total which is an all time high. As of September 1st 2023 our school population has 25.8% on SEND support and 3.6% with an Education Health Care Plan. This will rise to over 4.7% as the plans in draft are finalised during the Autumn term. The National expectation is for only 1.8% of a primary school population to have an EHCP. In Suffolk that rises to 2% of primary school students but we are still well above average numbers of SEND population.

The support given to our SEND children ranges from daily individualised timetables for a child with an EHCP to targeted support around areas such as transition. Each child's support is arranged in consultation with the SENDCo. The types of special need and disability our children have, is listed under the broad categories of SEND as defined in the 2014 Code of Practice, and includes:

- 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: mobility difficulties, visual processing difficulties; auditory processing difficulties

Over the last five years it has become recognised that we have increasing challenges accessing sufficient support for students with speech and language difficulties. In September, 2023 we have 47% of the students with SEND needs having speech language and communication needs. In 2020 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 support ensures that we give the highest possible level of language support to our youngsters. The specialist provides individual programmes for each student, delivered by ELKLAN trained staff, and assesses progress on a termly basis. At St Mary's we employ the specialist SALT for one full day a week in order to give the children with speech and language difficulties the best possible support at an early stage.

We believe that language and language development is a key area of concern for our students. We currently have 12 full time members of staff that are ELKLAN trained to a level 3 in working with children aged 5-11 years and 3 key Early Years staff are trained to a level 3 in working with children aged 3-5 years.

Our Early years setting is an accredited Communication Friendly Setting by ELKLAN and has a high level of support available for all children with Speech and Language difficulties. All Early years students are assessed for language skills using the Wellcomm assessment system. 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. As a whole school we are fully accredited as a Makaton Friendly setting.

In the Spring term of 2021-22 the whole school staff embarked on ELKLAN training to ensure that all staff are aware of the ways they can support children with language difficulties. This training is part of the Communication Friendly accreditation process and we achieved Whole school Communication Friendly status from the ELKLAN organisation during the summer term of 2023.

Working with Children who are Looked after by the Local Authority

In 2022-23 we had 2 children in the care of the local Authority on roll and a further 9 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. These children have full access to the same processes and support as all other children.

The staff members in charge of reviewing the progress of Children in Care, (CIC), are the DSL, Kate Hennessey and the SENDCo, 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.

Adaptations to the Curriculum

Children with SEND 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 SEND pupils when identifying the best pathways through learning. This inclusive teaching is called Quality First 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).

Attainment

2021-22 2022-23	Pupils without SEND	Pupils with SEND
Reception - GLD	63%	20%
KS1 - Reading	74%	17%



skills	64%	30%
	77%	24%

KS1 - Writing skills	50%	24%
	73%	15%
KS1 - Maths skills	61%	33%
	84%	31%
KS1 - Science skills	80%	42%
	55%	32%
KS1 - Beliefs and Values	80%	39%
	61%	37%
KS2 - Reading skills	71%	22%
	68%	26%
KS2 - Writing skills	36%	7%
	36%	15%
KS2 - Maths skills	54%	21%
	56%	25%
KS2 - Science skills	40%	6%
	60%	32%
KS2 beliefs and values	59%	23%
	63%	28%

Attainment data, which is what is nationally reported, shows the percentage of students who have achieved age appropriate levels of learning by subject. The progress data shows us the percentage of students who have made the expected levels of progress from their individual starting points over the academic year. This is a far more inclusive measure of achievement because it represents all students equally, regardless of where they fall when measured against age appropriate levels. I am delighted to see that in six of the measured areas the percentage of SEND children making expected progress is greater than the percentage of non-SEND children. This is true in both KS1 and KS2 and evidences the level of support and hard work being put in by both the students and staff.

Progress as or above expected from Dec 2021 - July 2022 Dec 2022 - July 2023

	No SEND	With SEND
KS1 - Reading	97%	91%



	85%	89%
KS1 - Writing	92% 91%	94% 92%
KS1 - Maths	92% 91%	94% 95%
KS1 - Science	94% 87%	88% 81%
KS1 - Beliefs and Values	92% 87%	91% 86%
KS2 - Reading	92% 84%	86% 92%
KS2 - Writing	99% 89%	98% 94%
KS2 - Maths	91% 84%	93% 94%
KS2 - Science	68% 92%	61% 86%
KS2 - Beliefs and Values	90% 92%	76% 89%

Looking After Children's Social and Emotional Well-being

In 2020-21 the Academy Pastoral team was formed. The SLT lead is Mrs Rutter and the SENDCo supports as Mental Health Lead for the academy. The members include the Emotional Literacy Support assistant, ELSA, the Nurture staff, the Mental Health Support Worker, MHSW, and the school counsellor. The team meets half termly to review requests for Pastoral support, the progress of supported children and to ensure that they work together to meet need in the most efficient and effective way.

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. 8 of our staff have completed a level 2 training course on challenging behaviours in children and 6 staff have completed a level 2 qualification in understanding and recognising mental ill health in children. These courses complement our fundamental belief that all behaviour is a communication rather than an isolated choice.

In the summer term of 2022-2023 all class teachers completed a training course on supporting children's emotional wellbeing which was led by the author Adrian Bethune. The course itself, Seeds of Happiness,



formed part of our RHSE classwork for the term and encouraged students to reflect on their understanding of happiness and positivity.

The Pastoral Lead and SENDco are trained mental health first aiders. This training is funded by the Department of Health and organised through Mental Health First Aid England, (see www.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 anxiety 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. The school counsellor and play therapist, Mr Keith Flynn, works with some of our most needy students. This provided them with expert support and a safe space in which to explore their feelings and emotions and has proved to be invaluable during the COVID19 pandemic. Mr Flynn provides feedback directly to parents and supports the family unit in working together to promote mental wellbeing.

In 2020-2021 we took part in the "Supporting and understanding children with Medical Needs at School " project run by the Radwael Trust and Oxford University Hospital Schools. This project allowed us to access a higher level of training in managing medical needs of all types and provided the staff of St Mary's with webinar training on specific medical conditions and their management. We continue to use their resources to support students with long term medical conditions.

We access support from Educational Mental Health Support Practitioners through the newly created NHS Mental Health Support Team. We now have a practitioner, allocated to work with families in our school community. The main area of her work is supporting parents whose children are experiencing significant anxiety and poor mental health as a result of the pandemic. We look forward to seeing her in and around the community more this year and welcome the support that this brings to our community.

St Mary's follows the practice and principles of the Nurture Schools Network. 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.



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 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.

Mrs Torbitt worked with over 60 children in her eight Art Nurture groups, ranging from year 3 to year 6. 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 Mrs Torbitt 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.

We have a trained ELSA, Emotional Literacy Support Assistant, Mr Sourav Mishra working to support children in KS1 with their social and emotional skill development. He works with groups of up to 5 students and 1:1 with some students who are finding managing their emotions particularly challenging.

In 2019-2020 the decision was taken to introduce the role of a fulltime Thrive Practitioner in school. The Thrive approach is based in neuroscience and was developed in the 1990's to combat the growing issue of students struggling with their emotional development. Thrive is a therapeutic approach to help support children with their emotional and social development. The Thrive approach offers practical strategies and techniques and is built around online assessments which identify children's emotional development and provide action plans for their individual needs. The Thrive practitioner work has enabled all teachers to be able to create Thrive programmes of support for the students whose emotional and social development is not at age expected levels.

If the pastoral work we do in school proves not to be effective, or sufficient to meet need, we can engage outside services from Suffolk County Council, or refer to a pupil referral unit (PRU), or to the NHS Mental Health Support team workers or, through the children's NHS Emotional wellbeing hub, to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

Evaluating the Effectiveness of our work with SEND 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.



As a school we use the Insight assessment system to evaluate progress and track student progress throughout the full curriculum. In line with the national curriculum children are assessed against National age expectation standards. For children whose progress against age expectation is unlikely to provide a full picture of their achievements we use the PIVATS system. This assessment system is skill based and allows us to track the level of skill development independently of age expectations. The progress of children as monitored by their Individual Support record is also added to this database.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of SEND Provision

The Principal and SEN Governor support the SENDCo 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 SENDCo 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. We use Provision mapping software on-line to support the recording and monitoring of SEND student progress.

Access to Extracurricular Activities

The school offers a range of extracurricular activities, both during and after school. Children on the SEND 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 extracurricular activities. In the school holidays we run a holiday fun club based around crafts and sports which is led by our Sports coach. This is available in every holiday break and students who receive pupil premium funding and who have additional needs are given priority places. In the longer holidays we also have Premier Sports running holiday activity clubs on site. This summer the activity club ran for 3 weeks with an average of 32 children attending each day. From September 2023 we are running a wraparound care programme to support working parents with their child care needs.

Working with Children

The school operates a Person-Centered approach to involving children in their education. All children in the school, including those with SEND, 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 SEND 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 SEND action plan.

As part of their pupil passport, SEND children are asked to think about their futures, although we know these ideas 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 having SEND needs 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. All parents have been given access to the Creative Education website and resources to support them with their parenting and understanding of their children's emotional and developmental needs.

A group of parents worked with the SENDCo 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 SEND 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 an experienced Education social worker, Mrs Kate Hennessey, 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. We are very aware of the lack of support that has been available to parents throughout the pandemic period and are providing a series of workshops to help bridge this knowledge gap and reduce the anxiety that they may be feeling in sending their children to school without having been able to access pre-school facilities.

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 the children 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, Local Authority Specialist SEND 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.

The school is a member of the Mildenhall SEN hub which is a collaboration of 15 local primary 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 from the County Inclusion Support Service. Many key staff have also had training in specific aspects of Nurture and Thrive provision.

The role of the SENDCo 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 SENDs. If necessary, we can call on additional local authority or NHS services to support our work with the students.

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 Church of England Academy receives funding from the Department for Education, some of which is intended to support children with SEND. For children who have particularly high levels of need and support, we apply for top-up funding (High Needs Funding) from Suffolk. In 2017-2018 we received £36,000 of this funding which was used primarily to employ additional teaching assistants to work with these high level SEND children. In 2020-21 the funding received reached £100,000. The level of increase in funding indicates the increase in levels of need we are seeing in our cohorts of students. In 2021-22 the additional funding for SEND children was £103,033. The fact that this figure continues to increase reflects the increase in SEND within the Academy population.

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 one Reception year classroom does not have an exterior ramp to accommodate wheelchair users. 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 are 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 headteacher
- Step 3: formal written complaint to headteacher
- Step 4: referral to the 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 SEND in the school. They can all be contacted via the school office:

- SEN governor: Mrs Nightingale- Roffe
- SENDCo: Ms. Lesley Osborne
- Principal: Mrs Roxanne Rutter
- Executive principal : Mrs Lorna Rourke
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The way in which we identify and work with our SEND children is clearly explained in our SEN policy. This can be accessed through the academy website: www.smpsac.org

The school forms part of Suffolk's local offer which can be accessed at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/children-families-and-learning/send-and-the-local-offer>

The Graduated response to SEND support can be found below:
<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/asset-library/imported/graduated-response-to-support-schools-and-settings.pdf>