



St Mary's Catholic High School

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report

This document describes how the school identifies and supports students with SEN. It is updated annually and is in the form of frequently asked questions so that you can navigate your way through the information.

What kinds of SEN are provided for at St Mary's Catholic High School?

We provide for all kinds of SEN within the four main areas described in the new Code of Practice, June 2014. These are:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Derbyshire County Council publishes detailed SEN descriptors and these guidelines are followed in identifying needs and putting support in place. Information about these can be found at www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/Descriptors.

How does the school identify students with SEN and assess their needs?

The term 'special educational needs' has a legal definition. Children with SEN all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it significantly harder for them to learn or access educational facilities than most children of the same age. These children will need extra or different help from that given to other children of the same age.

Some students' SEN are identified before they join the school. Within the school, identification and assessment are, to begin with, part of the system of whole-school monitoring and reporting of progress. All teachers will differentiate for those with difficulties in their classes and many students benefit from interventions that are part of the mainstream curriculum. However, if a student is not making the progress expected of them then school will investigate to find the cause and determine whether extra or different provision is needed. As part of this we may consult parents, observe and talk to the student, seek the views of teachers or arrange or carry out targeted assessments.

Staff involved may include:

- Head of Learning Support and SEN Co-ordinator – Alison Rosling
- Assistant SEN Co-ordinators – Julie Jackson and Maureen Titmus
- Head of Behaviour and Attitudes
- Head of Year
- Form Tutor
- Subject teachers
- Teaching Assistants

How does the school work with parents/carers to keep them involved in their child's education?

The school involves parents/carers in their child's education through termly progress reports or meetings with teachers. Each year group also offers other events for parents/carers that are specific to that stage in their child's education.

If a student is thought to have SEN, then parents/carers will be consulted as part of the assessment and planning process, recognising that they have a unique overview of their child's needs and how their child might be supported. They will also be involved in reviews of any provision put in place in school to support the student.

How does the school consult students with SEN and involve them in their education?

All students are involved in the school's general and subject-specific arrangements for target-setting, assessment and review.

A student thought to have SEN would be invited and encouraged to be involved in the SEN planning and review process, with opportunities to discuss any targets set and give their views on support given and progress made.

How is progress assessed and reviewed for pupils with SEN?

SEN support works on a **graduated approach**, as the new SEN Code recommends. This is a four part cycle where decisions and actions are revisited and refined with a growing understanding of the student's needs. It consists of:

- Assessment – done between subject teachers and SEN Co-ordinators, using assessment data and observation/experience of the student
- Planning – agreed between the teacher/SEN Co-ordinator team, parents/carers and student
- Doing – followed through by all involved
- Reviewing – against targets set at the planning stage

If assessment data and observations show that extra or additional support is needed, then parents/carers and the student will be consulted. The support will be planned and put in place and the student recorded as needing **SEN Support**.

Some students at SEN Support level will need specialist support from outside agencies. This will be arranged, so long as parents/carers agree. These outside agencies are likely to provide strategies and support for subject teachers as well as the student. At this stage a **Pupil Profile** would be produced through collaboration with parents/carers, the student and school. It describes the student's strengths and difficulties and, importantly, identifies the strategies that teaching and support staff need to use that will help the student. It may also detail what parents/carers can do to help their child as well as what the student needs to do.

A student can continue to receive support at this level as long as it is needed. However, if they do not make the expected progress after repeated cycles using the graduated approach, then the school, with parents

and any outside agencies involved, will consider whether a higher level of support is needed. If this is so, school will ask Derbyshire County Council to consider the student initially for **GRIP** funding and then possibly for an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** needs assessment. An EHCP is only drawn up by the local authority where a needs assessment shows that it is necessary because of the severity of the student's SEN or disability, and after consultation with other relevant agencies. It is a legal document that details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to the student. It contains objectives that are to be worked towards and is regularly reviewed.

How are students with SEN supported at key transition points?

Key transition points for our students are transfer from primary (or another secondary school) to St Mary's, from one Key Stage to the next and from school to post-school destination. The most important actions at each transition are planning and sharing information with all agencies involved, including the student and their parents/carers, so that changes happen smoothly and effectively in terms of support.

For transfers from primary or other secondary schools, contact is made with the sending school as soon as transfer is confirmed to discuss what support is currently needed and provided in school and any extra support that might be needed to aid transfer. This helps St Mary's to plan both the transfer and how the student might need to be supported in their new school.

Between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, from Year 9 into Year 10, all students and their parents/carers have opportunities to receive advice in choosing what subjects to study to public exam level. Students with SEN and their parents/carers may need or request additional information or support and this will be provided.

For those students with SEN who move on into the 6th Form, information is shared to ensure that any support needed at that stage can be planned and provided.

Careers information is given to all students from Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9) onwards and, in Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) and Key Stage 5 (Years 12 and 13), advice about possible destinations when they leave school. All parents/carers can request extra advice. For students with SEN, more information, advice or support may be needed or requested, and will be provided both for making the right choice and to ensure a smooth transition.

Some students who have an EHC Plan may also need extra focus to be given at Key Stage 4 on independent living and participation in employment and society.

How does the school support students in public examinations?

Where a student has a disability or learning difficulty that would make it hard for them to show their true level of ability in public exams, exam boards allow certain access arrangements to be made. They publish detailed guidelines to make sure that these are fairly applied: students have to be tested using reliable standardised tests and there has to be evidence of a history of need for this provision. School then has to apply individually for each student needing the support. Students with SEN, even an EHC Plan, do not automatically qualify for any particular support; it depends on their level of particular need.

The most common types of exam access support, though there are many more, are:

- a reader for those with very weak reading;
- a scribe where weak spelling makes writing unintelligible;

- extra time where reading speed, thinking speed or writing speed is very slow;
- rest breaks, often best in the case of temporary injury;
- word processing where efficient, practicable and needed to make presentation acceptable.

Teachers observe students when they do subject tests in school for signs that they might qualify. Then, towards the end of Year 9, formal screening of all at risk students takes place. Testing is completed and applications are made in Year 10, and parents are informed once permission has been obtained from the exam boards. It is unlikely but not impossible for a student to remain unidentified until Year 11, as this shows that there is not strong evidence of history of need. Exam access arrangements have to be reapplied for in Years 12 and 13 for A Levels.

How does the school approach the teaching of students with SEN and adapt the curriculum and learning environment for them?

St Mary's sees all students as individual learners and this particularly applies to those with SEN who have additional specific needs. All teachers are teachers of students with SEN and will differentiate for those with difficulties in their classes. The school has a large team of teaching assistants who work with students with SEN mainly in class. This allows the students to be included in lessons with their peers. The teaching assistant and teacher work closely together to provide the differentiation that will allow the students with SEN to access learning.

Many students benefit from interventions that are part of their mainstream curriculum. Other interventions need to be delivered by withdrawing students from parts of their mainstream curriculum. These SEN interventions are more individualised and intensive.

Interventions that school provides, according to need, can include:

- Group Literacy lessons
- Group Numeracy lessons
- Group Spelling lessons
- Weekly Buddy Reading
- Supported Study
- Social skills programmes and clubs
- Mentoring
- Motor skill development groups (Physical Literacy, Get Going clubs)
- Homework support

St Mary's runs an **Enrichment Learning Programme** for some of our students. Students are withdrawn from targeted lessons to follow an enhanced curriculum which aims to develop key life skills to enable our students to be more independent. Students follow an accredited course which could lead to an award, certificate or diploma at Entry Level 3. Teaching is in small groups and focused on functional skills through a practical, hands on approach to learning.

How are staff trained, and supported in working with pupils with SEN by specialist expertise?

All staff take part in continuous professional development (CPD) throughout each school year. SEN teaching and learning strategies are included in this.

External courses related to innovations in SEN are accessed by relevant school staff, as well as refresher courses as they are available. Staff are encouraged to develop their expertise in areas such as emotional health, dyslexia, autism, physical disability and any other needs that our students have. In addition to courses, school uses local services to provide advice and training for specific staff, these services including:

- Support Service for SEN
- Autism Outreach
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Physical Impairment
- Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- Educational Psychologist

Also provided for all school staff to access as needed, are the Inclusion Development Programme materials on:

- Dyslexia
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Autism
- Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (Dyspraxia)

How does the school evaluate and improve SEN provision?

SEN provision is evaluated as part of the school's regular departmental review programme, with improvement targets set that become part of the School Development Plan.

School seeks feedback from students and their parents/carers as part of the review of provision.

How are students with SEN included in the activities offered by the school?

School aims to include students with SEN in all school activities, provided that reasonable adjustments can be made to allow this. Such adjustments include:

- liaison with outside venues re facilities for access;
- modified or alternative activities on curriculum trips;
- special transport;
- additional adult support, individualised when appropriate.

In addition, the Learning Support Department runs a number of extra-curricular activities;

- games clubs
- Get Going club
- Homework support
- Sports clubs

St Mary's also enters teams in SEN Plus Sports events, offering students the opportunity to compete against other schools through the Chesterfield School Sports Partnership.

How does the school help the social and emotional development of students with SEN?

All students have access to pastoral care through the Form Tutor/Head of Year/Head of Key Stage structure in school. School recognises that some students, especially those with SEN, may need additional help in developing their social and emotional confidence. A variety of experiences are offered to students, according to their individual needs. These may include:

- In-class support from teacher or teaching assistant
- Individual or group mentoring
- A Key Worker
- In-school counselling
- Referral to appropriate outside specialist agencies such as the school nurse, school doctor, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, Educational Psychologist.

St Mary's has the established Wellbeing Team in-house to address the needs of our most vulnerable students and families, in conjunction with the existing pastoral support structure. The Wellbeing Team is comprised of a School Counsellor, Vulnerable and Emotional Needs Coordinator, Family Resource Worker, Careers Adviser and School Nurse. The Wellbeing Team does not replace Social Care or clinical mental health support.

School recognises that bullying can happen and all staff are aware that students with SEN may be more vulnerable. All students learn about the dangers and consequences of physical, verbal and online bullying, and how to deal with it, through the school's Personal, Social and Health Education programme plus assemblies and national campaigns. They are also encouraged to specifically look out for any instances of more vulnerable students being targeted in any unkind way. A parent/carer who suspects that their child is being bullied should contact the Form Tutor, Head of Year or a senior member of staff. Alternatively, the student can report it when in school to any member of staff that they feel comfortable to talk to.

How does the school work with outside agencies in supporting students with SEN?

School works with a number of outside agencies who can assess difficulties and/or provide advice on suitable support. Parents/carers and the student are always consulted before any of these agencies are contacted.

Educational Psychologist	Dr Marie Hornley
Lead SEND Officer 0-16	Alex Lawson-Chamberlain
Teacher for Physically Impaired Students	Donna Carter
Teacher for Visually Impaired Students	Angela Eccles
Teacher for Hearing Impaired Students	Anne Gould
Autism Outreach	Amanda Towers
Behaviour Support Service	Mick Binns
School Counsellor	Rachel Kaunhoven
School Doctor	Dr Chrissi Watson
School Nurse	Jo Marsh

School also works with other services such as

- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Careers
- Education Welfare
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS)
- Social Care
- Community Police Support Officers

Who do parents/carers of students contact if they are not clear about or not satisfied with the provision being made for their child?

There are many people at school that parents/carers might approach for help:

- If the student has a problem within a specific subject, then the first contact would be the subject teacher.
- If there is a pastoral issue, then the Form Tutor or Head of Year would be the best person to get in touch with.
- If the issue is related to extra provision being provided to support a student with SEN, then the SENCO (Mrs Alison Rosling) or one of the Assistant SENCOs (Mrs Julie Jackson or Mrs Maureen Titmus) should be contacted.

All of the above can be contacted on **01246 201191**.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact school if they ever have any questions or concerns. We always aim to provide the right kind of support at the right level for our students with SEN, working with them and their families to achieve this.

Parents/carers who would like an independent adviser who can arrange and attend meetings with them can get this support from Derbyshire Parent Partnership. They are based at:

Chesterfield District Registry Office
New Beetwell St
Chesterfield
S40 1QJ
Tel **01629 533660**

How can parents / carers and young people find out about more about provision in Derbyshire?

Derbyshire County Council present information about all the various supports available in the county for students and young people with SEN or disabilities. This is available on www.derbyshiresendlocaloffer.org.

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