

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report and School Offer



Mission Statement

To Love and Serve One Another

All schools need to provide a Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report and a school offer. The school offer is part of the wider Local Authority Offer, and is based on the requirement for all schools to outline the support available to children with SEND.

All Southwark maintained schools have a similar approach to meeting the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities and are supported by the Local Authority to ensure that all pupils, regardless of their specific needs, make the best possible progress in school. All schools are supported to be as inclusive as possible, with the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities being met in a mainstream setting wherever possible, where families want this to happen.

This report needs to be read in conjunction with the school's Accessibility Policy and Plan which is available to view via the School's Website. It further reinforces the principle aim to reduce and eliminate barriers in accessing the curriculum and to promote full participation in the school community for pupils and prospective pupils with a disability and or mobility difficulty.

Our Ethos

At St John's Catholic Primary School every member of staff and every child has a positive attitude to others with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The school environment we create is somewhere where everyone has the right to feel safe, cared for and supported whatever their race, colour, gender, class, or physical or learning challenge. Everyone in the school has a right to full access to the curriculum; and the right to learn in a caring environment where staff and children value their contribution to the life of the school.

Admission arrangements

Students with SEND are allocated places in two separate and distinct ways:

Those pupils with EHC Plans (Education Health and Care Plans) have a separate admissions procedure overseen by Southwark's SEN team.

Those pupils who have SEND but do not have an EHC plan are admitted via the normal school admissions criteria. (Please see school Website: <http://www.stjohnsrotherhithe.co.uk>)

Detailed information and guidance on how to apply for a place at St. John's, both if your child has an EHC plan, or if s/he has special needs but does not have an EHC Plan, can be found on the following link: <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions>. Any Special Needs that are identified on admission are discussed with parents allowing the school to facilitate, and put into place, support mechanisms to cater for the child's Special Educational Needs or Disabilities.'

Environment and reasonable adjustments

The school building is housed in a spacious, single storey, easily accessible building and as a result can cater for a wide variety of needs. Teachers adapt classroom layouts to cater for children with special needs and or a disability. For more information please view the Accessibility Plan which is available on the school's website.

Whole School Approach

We provide for all kinds of needs at St John's, usually grouped into 4 categories:

- communication and interaction
- cognition (thinking) and learning
- physical and sensory
- social, emotional and mental health needs.

Who is Involved?

Many people at the school will be involved in making sure your child is supported and achieves their full potential, but in different ways. These people include the class teacher, the support staff member assigned to the class, the Inclusion Manager, and the Head Teacher who is the SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator).

The child's class teacher

Your child's class teacher is responsible for your child's learning and progress. Should you have any concerns you should speak to them in the first instance. They will:

- always focus on high quality teaching and learning for all of the children in their class, including children with SEND.
- differentiate their planning and provision for the children; and their full range of unique abilities.
- check on the progress of your child and identifying planning and delivering any additional help your child may need (this could be things like targeted work, catch up exercises, additional support) and letting the Inclusion Manager and SENDCo know as necessary.
- ensure that all staff working with your child in school are able to deliver the planned work/programme for your child, so they can achieve the best possible progress.
- have a role in the initial information gathering when we are identifying and assessing if a child has an SEND.
- regularly communicate through a range of methods (e.g. pick-up times, phone calls, email, meetings, communication books etc.) with parents/carers.
- work with other members of school staff and external professionals where necessary to make the best provision for children with SEND – this includes the SENDCo and the Inclusion Manager.

Support Staff

Each class has an assigned member of the support staff team who is directed by the teacher to assist with teaching and learning.

Inclusion Manager and the SENDCo

If the school needs to involve another professional, we will always ask for your permission to do so and involve you in the work that this person does. The Inclusion Manager at St John's is Irene Verguizez and she carries out a number of duties. She:

- supports teachers and other staff in making further assessment of children with SEND; including arranging for external professionals to become involved where this is necessary
- makes sure that children without SEND but who are underachieving have their needs identified and addressed.
- ensures that all of the interventions put in place for children with SEND are working, and that there are based on evidence and best practice of what works for children with SEND.

- liaises with all the other people who may be coming into school to help support your child's learning e.g. Speech and Language Therapy, Educational Psychology , etc.
- advises the Teaching Assistant (TAs), who work to support the teachers in supporting children with SEND to be fully included and as independent as possible across the school day.
- works with families and other school staff to make the best provision for children with SEND and their families.
- keeps you informed about the support your child is getting and lets you know how they are doing.
- ensures that the school as a whole implements the Revised SEND Code of Practice (2014), and takes a strategic overview of the impact and effectiveness we have in this area.
- updates the school's SEND register (a system for ensuring all the SEND needs of pupils in the school are known) and making sure there are excellent records of your child's progress and needs.
- deals with complaints, concerns and issues as they first arise .

Head Teacher and SENDCo

Janice Babb is the Head Teacher and also the SENDCo at St John's. As such, she has overall responsibility for ensuring that your child's needs are met. She may also deal with any concerns that you may have about your child and the work they are doing. She ensure that the governing body is kept up-to-date about SEND in the school. The governor for responsibility for SEND is Michael Moore. The SENDCo or the governor responsibility for SEND can be contacted by emailing the school at office@st-john.southwark.sch.uk and marking the subject box with 'Contact for SENDCo'. Alternatively you can phone the school on 020 7252-1859.

Will the school be able to help my child if they have SEND?

Our school is a purpose built building, approximately twenty years old. We have some facilities for people with disabilities and as far as is practicable we ensure that equipment and adaptations are put in place to support each child's individual needs through purchasing additional resources, equipment or specialist help.

For those families who are new to the school and to help children feel welcome, Irene (the Inclusion Manager) arranges tours of the school for prospective new children and their families. She also meets with the child and parents/carers where appropriate; and if the child has been attending another setting, she tries to arrange a transition meeting with the previous school. For those children joining Reception class there is an open morning in the summer term for parents/carers to come along and meet the teacher and staff, and find out more about classroom routines. The school can provide a transition book for the summer break with photos of the school and key staff so parents/carers can use these with their child, where such an approach would be beneficial in helping the settling-in period.

How will my child be supported to be part of the school?

Most children with SEND are supported through the regular opportunities provided to all children; high quality teaching, excellent play opportunities and supportive staff. Some children with social, emotional or mental health needs find accessing and participating in school life difficult. For these children, we have a Learning Mentor on staff who can help with those children who have social and emotional barriers to their learning.

The curriculum of the school encourages children to develop respect for others, responsibility towards those who are vulnerable and to value difference and diversity. We listen to the views of our children through their input in the classroom at discussion and circle times as well as through those who are on the School Council. This way we encourage our children to take responsibility for their own words and actions which goes a long way to tackle bullying and inappropriate behaviour.

All children are set targets towards their learning goals and these are shared with the children. Those children with special educational needs will be given the opportunity to share with staff what they think is going well and why.

How is behaviour managed?

Positive behaviour in schools is essential, and we have a behaviour policy. We always try to encourage good behaviour through setting high expectations, forming good relationships with parents/carers built on trust, sharing children's positive behaviour and attitudes to work in our achievements assemblies. When a child's behaviour is cause for concern, staff at the school use a wide range of sanctions to discourage the child. We always deal with each incident individually, taking into account the age and understanding of the children concerned. Staff may need to administer a number of sanctions such as:

- a spoken warning about behaviour or attitude to work, in the class or when the child is on his/her own
- separation from other children if they are being disruptive
- loss of playtime
- removal to another class or to a member of the Senior Management Team for a short period of time.

What support do we offer you as a parent/carer of a child with SEND?

Involving parents/carers in the life of the school is very important to us and we make use of a variety of strategies to do this:

- Class and achievements assemblies
- School newsletters
- Website
- Parents' evenings
- Workshops
- School Events

Class teachers greet the children in the morning when they line up in the playground. We host termly parent's evenings for parents/carers to meet, discuss and see for themselves their child's progress in learning. Members of the Senior Management Team are available at the beginning and end of the day to speak with parents.

Irene is available to meet with parents/carers who have any questions or issues arising over the course of each term. She also schedules Team Around the Family meetings where these are necessary. This is an opportunity for parents/carers and external professionals who are working together to meet and plan or review provision that's been made for an individual child – these are usually children with severe and complex needs who have a number of different agencies working together.

Irene Verguizas can be contacted through the school office on 0207 252 1859 or by email at irene.verguizas@st-john.southwark.sch.uk.

For children with severe and complex needs who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, Irene arranges the Annual Review meeting. This is another opportunity for parents/carers and the child him or herself to come together to discuss and agree what's worked, what we need to focus on and what we are going to do next. Our website and Newsletters will keep you up-to-date with the School Offer.

What extra-curricular activities can my child participate in?

We do not discriminate against children with SEND, and extra-curricular opportunities are available for children with SEND. We have a range of after-school clubs at St John's. If you feel that your child requires additional support to access a club that they would like to attend, please speak to your child's class teacher or Irene.

We strongly encourage all children to participate in school trips – these are an important part of your child's time at this school. All school trips are risk assessed and we ensure there are appropriate measures taken to ensure all children's safety and well-being when off-site.

What support is available at less structured times of the day (e.g. playtime, lunch)?

We know that some children find less structured times in the day more challenging. We have distinct areas in our playground – places for busy games (the ball cage), an area for less busy games (the middle playground) and the lower playground for more quiet play. By arranging our outdoor play areas like this we believe that all children will be able to feel comfortable playing as they would like to play during break and playtimes; It also helps so as not to interfere unduly with the play of other children.

Where it's necessary, we can provide additional support to these children to facilitate access to playground equipment, encouraging them to play with others and helping the children learn how to resolve conflicts independently.

How will teaching be adapted to meet the needs of my child?

At St John's, all teacher focus on providing all children with Quality First teaching (QFT). This means that we focus on the effective inclusion of all pupils in high-quality everyday personalised teaching. Such teaching is based on:

- the teacher having the highest possible expectations for your child and all pupils in their class
- building on what your child already knows, can do and can understand
- different ways of teaching being in place so that your child is fully involved in learning in class – this may involve things like using more practical or visual methods of learning
- clear objectives that are shared with the children and returned to at the end of the lesson
- lively, interactive and creative teaching styles, across the curriculum
- the provision of stimulating and challenging learning experiences
- good feedback to the children about what has worked and what they can do next time to improve, so that children know what their next steps for learning are
- opportunities for the children to assess themselves and their peers as relevant.

As part of QFT, all teachers differentiate: this means they tailor their teaching to meet a child's individual needs. They might change the content slightly, or how they teach, or the product expected at the end of the learning – all based on what works best for your child.

How will I know how my child is doing?

Parents/carers are strongly encouraged to attend all termly parents' evenings, as this is a critical opportunity for you to find out about your child's learning and development, it is also an opportunity for you to share with your child's class teacher any of your child's achievements and strengths that you would like us to celebrate in school. We also have regular achievements assemblies, to which you are invited.

What skills do the staff have to meet the needs of my child?

- All class teachers in the school are qualified teachers who have access to a range of support and training opportunities across the year
- The school has a training plan for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of children including those with SEND. This includes whole school training on SEND issues such as Literacy difficulties and Speech and Language difficulties
- 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 the Early Help Service, the Autism Support Team, etc.

How do you identify children who may have special needs?

We use a range of strategies to identify whether you child has SEND or is underachieving their potential. These include receiving information from health professionals or staff from a child's previous setting/school. For those children who arrive to us with needs already identified we always contact these practitioners to find out what they

have been working on and what needs to happen next. For other children, we first provide high quality teaching and observe their response to this. It is only when your child doesn't make expected levels of progress after having this teaching and we have ruled out other explanations, that we start making further assessment of SEND.

This is done through teacher observation and assessment, use of specific assessment tools and the involvement of other professionals where needed (e.g. asking your permission for a Speech and Language Therapist to assess your child's communication needs). We talk to your child and to you about their learning, what is working for them, where the gaps are and how we can best work together to make progress.

How will my child manage tests and exams?

Ongoing formative assessment is carried out by teachers both formally and informally during a unit of work. The results of formative assessment has a direct impact on the teaching materials and strategies employed immediately following the assessment. Results and observations are kept in a teacher's own assessment folder and in children's books/folders. If your child has been identified as having SEND and is making small steps of progress, Irene and your child's class teacher may decide it is necessary to create an individualised Learning Profile.

Summative assessments (tests) occur at defined periods during the academic year such as pre-determined SATs tests as well as other optional tests produced by recognised organisations such as NFER or Pearson. Summative tests are used alongside teacher assessment to help teacher in making end of year and end of key stage assessments. Class teachers ensure those with SEND access suitably differentiated tests and have additional time if required. In Year 6 prior to SATs assessments a decision will be made with you about whether or not it is appropriate for your child to participate. Irene and the Head Teacher will then determine whether any pupils with SEND require a reader, scribe and/or additional time to access the tests.

What happens if my child does have some difficulties?

We further personalise the planning and provision we make for your child – working together to decide what outcomes we want for the year or the term, and then what support is needed to achieve those outcomes. The plan is then put in place, monitored and reviewed to check if it has made a difference. Some children benefit from small group work (sometimes called intervention groups). These can be run or overseen by your child's class teacher. Some intervention groups are focused on where the gaps are and will use strategies to close those gaps. The intervention groups will be monitored by the senior staff of the school with the Intervention Manager. They may be run inside or outside the classroom.

We also sometimes provide specialist groups or individual support as advised by external professionals if children would benefit from this approach. For some children more specific, target led, small group or individual work will be needed to support their progress in school. This may involve working with a teacher, teaching assistant or other professional, for example a speech therapist. This additional support may take place in or out of the classroom depending on the needs of all pupils. Please note that not all intervention groups are to support pupils with SEND.

How do I find out more about what my child needs?

As said before, the class teacher is responsible for every child, and on a daily basis observes and assesses what your child needs, how they are responding to the teaching and what changes might need to be made to this. If the class teacher would like support in assessment or provision, they discuss this with the Inclusion Manager and other senior staff, who then work together with your child and you to find out more about what your child needs.

What will you do once you know what my child finds difficult?

We put a plan together, implement it and give it some time to work. We set a date to review it, and then come back together to discuss whether it's made a difference.

What extra support can be brought in to help the school meet the needs of my child?

There are a range of services we draw upon – Speech and Language Therapy, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Paediatricians (including the Social Communication Clinic at Sunshine House Child Development Centre), Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and specialist teaching staff (e.g. specialist teachers for literacy difficulties).

Who makes sure everything is happening?

Every class teacher is responsible for every child in their class. The SENDCo, and Inclusion Manager because of their working relationships with external professionals, also have a responsibility to ensure that services for children with more complex needs are being provided. Ultimately, the Head Teachers are responsible for the education of all the children at the school and they too review the provision in place for all children.

How will you know if the provision is making a difference for my child?

When we set the outcomes or goals that we want for your child, we try to be specific and measurable so we know if we are making a difference. For example, it might be that we want your child to read more fluently, or we would like them to count in 10s or to 100: it really depends on what your child's needs are and their personalised targets. You, as the expert on your child, will most likely notice these steps of progress and you sharing your child's achievement at home are really important to us!

What if it isn't working as you had hoped?

After we review the initial plan and strategies we've put in place, if we find progress has stalled or isn't as quick as we might have hoped, we will discuss with you the available agencies who can help us. We ask your permission for their involvement and they observe and assess your child, speak with the teacher or teaching assistant, meet with you and help us think together about what we need to do next. This could be more personalised provision, different teaching strategies or different types of intervention groups – it will depend on your child's needs.

What happens if I am still worried or disagree?

Talking through your concerns with Irene, the Inclusion Manager will help identify what the outstanding concerns or worries are and how we can best help. If you still cannot agree, you are encouraged to speak to the Head Teachers.

What if I think my child needs more help than the school can provide?

If you think that your child needs more help than the school can provide, there is the option of asking the local authority for an assessment to decide whether an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan) is needed. Having an EHC Plan means your child needs a very significant amount of individualised support that cannot be provided from the budget available to the school. It also usually means their needs are very severe, complex and likely to have a lifelong impact on their learning and development.

For your child this would mean:

- The school (or you) can request that the local authority carry out an assessment of your child's needs. This is a legal process which would set out the amount of support that will be provided for your child if they had an EHC Plan.
- After the school have sent in the request to the Local Authority (with a lot of information about your child, including from you), they will decide whether they think your child's needs are complex enough to need an assessment. If this is the case they will ask you and all professionals involved with your child to write a report outlining your child's needs. If they do not think your child needs this assessment, they will ask the school to continue with school-based support.
- After the reports have all been sent in, the local authority will decide if your child's needs are severe, complex and lifelong. If this is the case they will write an EHC Plan. If not, they will ask the school to continue with school-based support and also set up a meeting in school to ensure a plan is in place to ensure your child makes as much progress as possible.

What if I disagree with some aspect of the plan, or I disagree about them conducting the assessment?

The best thing for you to do is to talk to the local authority about why they have made the decision they have. The Southwark Information Advice Service/ Parent Partnership Service are also available to help you, and there are routes you can go down if you remain dissatisfied. Their contact details are : tel 0207 525 2886 or 0207 525 2866; email: parentpartnership@southwark.gov.uk

How will the school help my child to manage the transitions into the school?

- Irene arranges tours of the school for prospective new children with special educational needs and their families
- Irene also meets with the child and parent/carer where appropriate; and if the child has been attending another setting, she tries to arrange a transition meeting with the previous school.
- Our Reception class teachers host an open session in the summer term for parents/carers to come along and meet the teachers and find out more about classroom routines
- The school can provide a transition book for the summer break with photos of the school and key staff so parents/carers can use these with their child, where such an approach would be beneficial in helping the settling in period.
- If appropriate, Irene will arrange additional visits or a staggered start for children with special educational needs.

How will the school help my child manage the transition into a new class?

- A staff meeting is allocated for class teachers to share key information about the children in their class, including differentiation strategies, successful behaviour management strategies and your child's strengths and needs.
- Irene will schedule transition meetings for pupils with complex needs, so that they can become with the surroundings and key staff.
- The school provides transition books for the summer break with photos of the school and key staff so parents/carers can use these with their child, where such an approach would be beneficial in helping the settling in period.

How will the school help my child manage the transition to secondary school?

- Irene will liaise with the SENDCo of your child's new school, organising a transition meeting if necessary. Your child will be invited to attend all or part of the meeting as appropriate.
- As necessary and if the secondary school is in agreement, a familiar member of the support staff team will attend additional taster days with your child.

How will the school fund the support needed for my child?

Part of the school's budget has been allocated to help it meet the needs of pupils with SEND. At St John's, we manage these resources effectively and try to ensure that pupils receive adequate support to help them make progress.

How are decisions made about funding and what can I do if I'm unhappy with this?

Governors set the budget at this school and the Head Teacher reports regularly to the governing body on how resources are deployed. Unless your child has an Education Health and Care Plan, their learning and support all comes from the school's delegated funding. Only those children with the most complex needs receive an additional sum of money which is in turn given to the school.

Where can I or my child get further help, information and support?

The first port of call is your child's class teacher or the Inclusion Manager, Irene.

The school website is also regularly updated, and is an important source of information for parents/carers, as well as links to other helpful sites – make sure you regularly check in for updates! There are local drop-in services for parents/carers for children with SEND (e.g. the drop-in at Sunshine House Child Development Centre on Friday mornings). Please speak to Irene if you would like further information on drop-in services

Where can I find out about what is available locally for me, my family or my child?

Each local authority is producing their own local offer, depending on which borough you live in you will be able to find out more information by clicking <http://localoffer.southwark.gov.uk> for Southwark and <http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/my services/socialcare/children> for Lewisham
You can also contact the Parent Partnership Service in your authority www.southwarkparentpartnership.co.uk.
Another useful contact is the national charity Contact a Family www.cafamily.org.uk/southwark.

How do I complain if I am not happy with what is happening for my child?

We hope that every parent/carer is happy with what is in place for their child. If you have anything you are not sure about, or have a concern with, the first thing to do is always discuss this with your child's class teacher. In most instances, issues are resolved at this stage. However, if you remain unhappy you can also speak to Irene Verguizas, or one of the Head Teachers at the school. There is a copy of the school's complaints procedure available upon request from the school.

Review: Version 5 – January 2020