

SEND Information Report 2023-24

How do we define special educational needs and disabilities?

St John's Infants School regards pupils as having a Special Educational Need if they:

- a) Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of pupils of the same age, or;
- b) Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools.

(SEND Code of Practice 2015).

How does the education setting know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Children's needs may be categorised into four different areas:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

We believe that early identification of special educational needs, whether it is social, emotional, physical, communication or a specific learning difficulty, is crucial to the wellbeing of all our children.

Special Educational Needs are identified in the following ways:

- Concerns from class teacher relating to limited progress or curriculum access
- Concerns from parents / carers relating to progress or curriculum access
- School assessment data highlighting out of step progress or attainment
- Consultation with health services regarding medically diagnosed conditions such as autism or physical difficulties impacting on curriculum access
- Consultation with previous settings on transfer of new pupils

If parents / carers have any concerns about their child's development or potential special educational needs, they should in the first instance speak to the class teacher. Further meetings may then be arranged with the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO). Official parents/carers' evenings are held three times a year. However, concerned parties should not wait until then but speak to the teacher as soon as they have concerns.

As an inclusive school we do not seek to closely define the special educational needs for which we will make provision. Historically we have had success in providing for a wide range of different needs, when budget, resources and availability of expertise has allowed. This has included pupils with:

- Dyslexic tendencies
- Autistic Spectrum Condition

- Downs Syndrome
- Attachment Difficulties
- Physical Difficulties
- Visual and Hearing Impairment
- ADHD
- Specific medical conditions such as Epilepsy

In admitting pupils with special educational needs, we would expect to have informative discussions with both the pupil's family and the local authority to ascertain the suitability of our provision. We understand that it is initially our responsibility to make provision for a pupil with special educational needs through the school's devolved SEND budget. Thereafter we are aware of the process of applying for High Needs Funding, through an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP,) if the pupil's and the school's needs make that a necessity. As a mainstream school, it would clearly be difficult for us to make provision for pupils whose needs and/or demands are significant, severe or profound – to the extent that it could be argued that they would be most appropriately placed in a specialist school. However, we do not rule this out and would make a careful assessment of the needs of each pupil in constructive conversation with other agencies.

How will St John's Infants School support my child?

When a child requires specialised individual support on a medium or long term basis, an assessment of need will be carried out and a plan of graduated support may be put in place. This will be recorded on our 'Assess Plan Do Review' support plan form and shared with parents / carers. The assignment and co-ordination of additional support lies with the SENCO, however, the face-to-face meetings with the parents and regular updates will in general be carried out by the class teacher. If a child has or requires an Education Health Care plan, additional information meetings will take place between the SENCO and parents/carers.

We have a member of the governing body, Pamela Heazell, assigned to monitor SEND provision. She meets with the SENCO termly to challenge and support the school. The SENCO reports the progress made by children with SEND to the governing body three times a year. This report contains analysis of the effectiveness of provision for children with SEND.

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

When planning, teachers have the responsibility to make sure learning can be accessed by all members of their class, by delivering a solid wave 1 curriculum that is suitably differentiated. Additional resources are deployed where needed to make this possible. This could be in the form of additional adult support in the classroom or specialist equipment, and will be planned for on a child's graduated response document, (Assess, Plan, Do, Review.) Actions are taken in line with Somerset's Graduated Response Tool. [What to expect from education](#)

How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child with their learning?

The Support Plan document is written with and shared with parents / carers. This contains the information explaining the additional and different support a child is receiving, how often this is happening and the practitioners involved in delivering this support.

St John's Infants School encourages good communication between parents and staff. Teachers are on hand twice a day to discuss concerns and longer appointments can be made if necessary. Where this is not possible, e.g. if a child attends breakfast or after school provision, a home school book or email arrangement can be set up to keep an open dialogue regarding progress. The school also uses Class Dojo as a form of communication, and parents are available to message teachers, who will endeavour to reply during working hours.

If part of a child's provision is a specific intervention such as Individualised Literacy Intervention, (ILI) then parents / carers are provided with information on what this will entail before starting, and ways of

supporting their children at home are fully explained. We welcome parents dropping in to receive updates and gain additional support when they feel they need it. Parents are also welcome to attend an intervention session to observe the support given to the child.

Parents / carers can also book sessions with our Parent/Family Support Worker (PFSA) to look at ways of meeting additional needs at home.

The SENCO is available to meet with parents / carers to provide updates and explore options regarding meeting children's needs. The SENCo and SEN/D governor carry out informal drop-in sessions once a term to enable parents to meet together and discuss their children in a supportive manner, and to ask any questions they may have about their child's needs.

What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

We have the following support available:

- Parent / Family Support Worker (Mandy Thorpe) to work with parents providing a vital link between home and school. This could be through individual support or parenting support groups. It can also be to help raise attendance of vulnerable groups.
- Teaching assistants in each class all day to support nurture and learning
- Whole school staff trained in Emotion Coaching techniques
- Specialist trained yoga, mindfulness and well-being teacher, (Mrs Bubble) delivering individual and small group interventions
- Intervention groups including Talk Boost, (Speech) Read Write Inc (Phonics) and Maths
- Consistent approach to behaviour policy throughout the school, with 3 clear school rules- Be Kind, Be Safe, Be Ready
- Regular check ins with adults, providing opportunities to talk and offload
- Calm boxes and sensory toys available in every classroom

- After school enrichment clubs including gardening, gymnastics, Lego, Sumdog (maths,) reading and drawing, Abbey Wanderers (movement and talk,) multisports and 'Bubble Club,' (Mindfulness and yoga.)
- Lego Therapy groups

What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the educational setting?

We access specialist support for children as required. These may include:

- Educational Psychology Service
- Learning Support Advisory Service
- Physical Impairment Medical Service (PIMS)
- School Health Nurse
- Physiotherapy Service
- Occupational Therapy Service
- Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Communication and Autism Team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

- Paediatrician Service
- Social Care
- Specialist school outreach support services
- Hearing and Vision Impairment Service
- Play Therapy practitioner

Most of these services are called in by school; others are accessed via your child's GP. The SENCO can offer advice around accessing such support. These services help us 'assess' and form a 'plan'. We then employ additional staff to help us 'do', then the agency is called back in to 'review' and re-plan, thus following the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.

What training is available for staff supporting children with SEND?

Staff access training on a rolling programme, depending on the needs of the children in school. Over the last few years support staff have received training from the Educational Psychology Service, including Team Teach, Attachment and Early Childhood Trauma, The autism team have delivered training on working with children with Autism and supporting girls with autism. The PIMS team offered support on using specialist computer equipment. Support Staff have had training on Positive Handling. Some support staff have received training from the Nurture Network. Play Therapy training has been received. Support TAs have also received training on interventions such as Individual Literacy Intervention and the whole school staff have completed Read Write Inc training. The Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Services provided individual training for support staff working with sensory needs. All staff have been trained in Emotion Coaching and have received training on our positive behaviour policy in school, promoting positivity. Each class also has at least one staff member qualified in Paediatric First Aid.

How will St John's Infants School prepare and support my child to transfer to a new setting or the next stage of education and life?

A change of school, class and staff can be an exciting, yet anxious time for all pupils. We recognise that this can be especially challenging for some pupils with SEND. We endeavour to make sure these periods of change are carefully managed in a sensitive way to provide continuity of high quality provision and reassurance to pupils and families. Our school understands the need for good transition practice and this is especially important for a pupil with SEND.

Most children from St John's transfer onto St Benedict's Junior School and staff from both schools meet regularly to ensure continuity. Throughout St John's, children have opportunities to visit St Benedict's, including using their facilities for Sports Day. In Year Two, extra transition activities are arranged, including attending regular reading sessions, where the year twos buddy up with an older child at St Benedict's. Year 3 teachers also teach a range of different lessons to the year 2 pupils and come to visit the year 2s in their own classrooms.

If a child has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or a particular SEN/D, preparation for transfer to the next school begins in the January of Year 2. Parents / carers are encouraged to visit the setting and meet with the SENCO. The SENCOs of both schools meet and support the decision making process by arranging additional visits, accompanying parents if required. A representative from the junior school, or another chosen school is then invited to the pupils' Annual Review meeting. There is a thorough handover in order to ensure that the new school has a good understanding of the pupils' needs and requirements.

When a placement has been agreed, a transition plan is formulated on an individual basis. This includes extra visits to the setting to meet with key staff. The learning mentor from St Benedict's visits our pupils, spending time with the children in a familiar setting, and then our pupils requiring additional support visit St Benedict's several times, with trusted members of staff, to build their familiarity with the new setting.

Children may be identified for group or individual sessions with the nurture team to support transition. Occasionally, transition is supported by outside professionals, such as Child Looked After Support workers and counsellors.

How are St John's Infants resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

When a child has received support in excess of £6000 per year and still needs a greater level of provision, an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be requested. The money received may be spent on children having a one-one TA to support learning for all or part of the day, resources for the classroom and individual programmes such as speech and language/ physiotherapy. Money may be used to request extra services or access training, but this is agreed in conjunction with the child's parents/carers, SENCO, class teacher, TA and the headteacher.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

The decision to give a child additional support is made by measuring their distance away from age related expectations. The decision for funding is made by the local authority. School support is made by the SENCO, class teacher and head in response to concerns raised at pupil progress meetings, parents meetings or SEND review meetings. We have a number of interventions, based on quality assurance from the education endowment foundation that have proven results to aid the acquisition of basic skills in both literacy and numeracy. These are time constrained and progress measured. Parents / carers will be informed that their child is on such a programme by the class teacher or the practitioner running the intervention. Ways to support at home can also be discussed at this point, if not before.

If a child or group of children have additional learning support in class, it is because we believe they can't effectively access the curriculum without this. Reasons for this could include communication and interaction difficulties, specific learning difficulties, social and emotional difficulties or sensory and physical needs. The impact of these interventions is measured at the end of each intervention by the teacher and SENCO. The measures of attainment and more importantly, progress are used to measure success and plan effectively.

We recognise the well-documented studies that show additional adults in class do not lead to accelerated outcomes and therefore, we only use this approach when it is the only way to keep a child included.

If a child has a learning support assistant (one-one TA) they are available before and after school to meet with parents/carers to discuss learning and offer support.

How are parents / carers involved in the education setting? How can I be involved?

Parents / carers are welcome to speak briefly to the adults involved with their child's education daily before or after school. If a longer meeting is required, this can be arranged. The SENCO and head-teacher are also on hand to discuss any concerns parents may have. We encourage a close working relationship between parents and school as we believe parents know their child best. We consult heavily when forming care plans and meeting medical and physical needs. We understand that parenting can be a demanding job and encourage parents to access our Family Support Worker as needed.

How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including trips?

We strive to make sure all trips and activities are accessible for all learners. Ratios of staff to children are adjusted to make this possible. Parents of children with specific disabilities or medical needs are consulted in the planning stages and an individual risk assessment is carried out if needed. On occasion, parents may be invited to support their child on a particular visit.

How accessible is the education setting?

St John's Infants School is on a mainly flat site. It is a main building of over 100 years old and a newer extension, housing our Reception and Nursery pupils. The classrooms are all wheelchair-accessible and there is an accessible toilet in the centre of the school. We have drawn up individual accessibility plans where necessary with the support of the PIMS team, to ensure classrooms are suited for individual pupils.

Equipment to support children is often purchased directly by the school. In the case of a large piece of equipment e.g. a specialist chair or walking frame needed for a particular length of time, we would look to hire or loan it.

Every caution is taken to make sure the site is secure.

Accessibility Plan

In line with the Equality Act, 2010, St John's Infants School has an Accessibility Plan, which is reviewed and updated every two years. This Accessibility Plan is available on the policies page of our website. [Policies - Welcome](#)

The plan is in place in order to:

- Increase the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the school curriculum
- Improve the physical environment of the school to increase the extent to which disabled pupils can take advantage of education and associated services
- Enable the needs of all pupils to be met so that they reach their fullest potential and school standards of achievement are raised
- Ensure that all pupils have equal access to information, the curriculum and the physical environment.
- Challenge and prevent disability discrimination in any aspect of school life by consistently restructuring existing cultures, policies and practices so that they respond to the diverse needs of all pupils
- Create an inclusive atmosphere where all pupils are equal members of the school community.
- Provide written information to disabled pupils and their families in a format which takes into account their preferred method of communication.

Who can I contact for further information?

If a parent / carer is worried about their child they should first contact their child's teacher or the SENCO, Mrs Becky Maisey (ask at the main office).

If a parent / carer of a child with SEN/D is considering joining St John's Infants, they should speak to the headteacher, Mrs Kerry Devane, or the SENCO, Mrs Becky Maisey, who will talk to them about their child's specific needs and how we can accommodate them at St John's.

Somerset's SEND Local Offer is set out on the following website. [Somerset's SEND Local Offer](#)

A copy of the Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy can be found on our website.
[Policies - Welcome](#)