

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report January 24

This document is for parents considering our school for their child and for parents of pupils already in the school. It aims to clarify how we support children with any degree of additional need. Although it may appear extensive, the detail included is to help try and cover all issues. However please contact the school to speak to someone if you further questions. There is also a SEND Policy available on the school website.

The world of education is full of specialist terminology. A glossary is available at the end of the document.

The SEN Code of Practice, within the Children and Families Act 2014, requires all schools to publish how they meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disability (SEND). SEND is an umbrella term. It includes SEN, disability and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) i.e conditions such as Dyslexia and Autistic Spectrum Disorder. These conditions may impact on a pupil's learning to varying degrees; they all exist on a spectrum of severity. More severe conditions tend to be identified and diagnosed earlier in childhood. These pupils will arrive in school with SEN identified but it is not uncommon for barriers to learning to be revealed, and where possible diagnosed, during Primary School years.

Within Hertfordshire, schools have chosen to follow this format of 16 questions to help inform parents of how they meet the needs of all pupils. Further information is available from the Inclusion Co-ordinator (INCo) at St Nicholas who looks after the provision for all pupils with SEND.

St Nicholas recognises the definition of SEN within the Code of Practice 2014:
"A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

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

This information has been compiled by the INCo, a parent of a pupil with special educational needs or a disability, a Teaching Assistant who works with pupils with SEND and the school Governor responsible for SEND. It is reviewed annually by a similar working party.

- 1. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?**

- If you think your child has special educational needs or any medical needs please arrange to talk to the INCo when you are thinking of applying to our school. As well as ensuring that the physical lay-out of the school will be suitable, we can liaise with the nursery education provider or current school to help ensure a smooth transition.

Parents are encouraged to raise any concerns about their child's learning in the first instance with the Class Teacher. The INCo can be contacted during term time by phone or email via the School Office where parents can raise any concerns. There is a very regular and effective cycle of assessment within the school year, formed of:

- Termly teacher assessments
- Pupil progress meetings with the class teacher, Headteacher and INCo
- SEND specialist screeners where needed
- Parent liaison
- Formal specialist assessments may be recommended. Some specialist assessments may be available via a referral from school. Hertfordshire County Council does not offer Formal Dyslexia Assessments via its Educational Psychology or SpLD Service.

This cycle of assessment affords staff opportunities to assess individual progress, share professional judgements and suggest appropriate interventions. It is key to our graduated response to meeting the needs of pupils.

- Parents would be made aware of any concerns as soon as they arise, initially by the class teacher.
- Early identification of SEN is key to providing appropriate support.
- In Teacher Assistant (TA) meetings and staff meetings any vulnerable children are discussed. In this way all adults contribute towards the whole picture of a pupil's learning and personal development.
- Introducing strategies to support behaviour in class, or social skills in the playground, is as equally important as additional support for learning.
- Where a pupil transfers from another school, their special educational need may have already been identified and we would hope to receive any appropriate paperwork from the former school.
- A pupil joining from another school may be identified via our assessment cycle as being below expected levels for their age. In this case reasonable adjustments and/ or support may be given for a period of time to help narrow this gap. If this support does not sufficiently narrow the gap, and other evidence would suggest this would be appropriate, further assessments would be conducted in school to help identify any Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) traits or medical condition.
- *The school recognises that not all SpLD or medical conditions lead to a disparity between chronological age and age-related attainment. In some cases pupils develop coping strategies which mask indicators. Whilst this may mean that their condition is not severe enough to gain local authority*

intervention, teachers will work closely with parents and pupils to make learning as accessible as possible, make reasonable adjustments and where relevant and applicable follow appropriate recommendations from private reports.

During periods of school closure, teachers will liaise with parents of pupils with SEN.

2. How will school staff support my child?

High standards of class teaching with effective planning and differentiation are the foundation of all pupils' needs being initially met in class. Further support is available in many forms from the Class Teacher, Teaching Assistant, SEN Teaching Assistant or the INCo. If it is felt a pupil needs extra help with their learning, behaviour or social skills there will be liaison between the staff to develop effective personal strategies.

These might be:

- in class and may include additional or personalised resources
- working in a small group to consolidate learning either in class or with the SEN TA.
- the sharing of strategies with all staff including lunch-time supervisors to help manage play
- a One Page Profile if a pupil has an identified SEN so that all adults and children understand provision and adjustments in place and the pupil knows their prioritised targets for effective learning
- a range of SEN resources are available and additional items may be purchased to meet new needs
- the key to all SEND provision in our school is reasonable adjustment whereby expected outcomes are modified so that a pupil can achieve as well as his/her peers
- additional training for staff to meet a pupil's needs will be sought and planned if necessary
- practical arrangements will be made to accommodate specialist resources e.g. storage of medical equipment.
- for pupils with medical needs, an Individual Health Care Plan will be written by the school with the parent and signed by the parent
- personalised and/or additional homework
- reviewing completed homework with an adult

3. How will I know how my child is doing?

- St Nicholas operates an open-door policy and teachers are available for informal updates at the end of the day. There are also informal but written forms of regular communication such as the Reading Record Book or Home-School diaries
- The INCo is available for planned meetings and will also communicate with parents via email as needed.
- There is a planned calendar of parent liaison with Parent Consultation meetings with the Class Teacher (and where relevant/possible the INCo also) in the Autumn and Spring term. A separate meeting on a different evening may be planned where the usual period of time to discuss progress may not be sufficient.
- A full written report is provided at the end of the academic year and a short-written report mid-year.
- In addition, pupils with identified SEN have a One Page Profile and a copy each term is sent to the parent. Parents are invited to contribute to the Profile and it may prompt a meeting to discuss progress.

4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?

- St Nicholas uses a cycle of termly assessment for all pupils which together with a detailed view of the individual pupil, helps identify pupils who need more support to make expected progress. The following points marked * are each a stage in this our established cycle which matches the Assess Plan Do Review model required by the Code of Practice 2014.
- Effective learning for all pupils is based on well planned and differentiated teaching in the class supported with additional adult support or additional resources.*
- There is reasonable adjustment of expected outcomes for pupils with SEND.*
- One Page Profiles are formed to focus on priority areas within learning Pupils contribute to their One Page Profile their strengths are noted.*
- Each term progress is reviewed with new priority targets set for individual pupils.*
- All pupils complete My Learning Portrait during class transition sessions this enables pupils to share their views, strengths and areas they recognise they need to improve.*
- Access arrangements e.g. additional time to complete written assessments or working in a separate room with a Teaching Assistant with rest breaks are introduced where needed.
- Teaching may be adapted to support a pupil's preferred method of learning; for example visual methods and use of manipulatives
- A school Governor is assigned to oversee the provision for SEND pupils and meets each term with the INCo to compile a report and/or discuss changes and priorities which are shared with all the Governors as a requirement for our Full Governing Body.
- *Where appropriate additional technology will be used, for example providing iPads or laptops to individual pupils.*

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

- St Nicholas has a strong pastoral ethos which supports every pupil in all areas of their personal, emotional and academic development.
- Pupils report that the consistent rules, with appropriate sanctions and rewards, make them feel safe in school.
- As a small school, pupils are able to work together forming strong links across the age range, for example each new Reception pupil has a Buddy in Year 6 who helps them settle in in their first weeks.
- Early indications of vulnerability are identified early by all staff and weekly staff meetings and monthly Teaching Assistant meetings.
- Strategies are regularly used to support pupils' confidence and self-esteem such as being given the responsibility for running the playground, library or being chosen as the pupil to help prepare the teaching room for the SEN Teaching Assistant.
- A range of targeted interventions are used to support wellbeing including; social skills groups, Lego therapy, nurture groups, time to talk to a trusted adult, specialist child therapy, and counselling via organisations such as NessieinEd.
- Pupils participate in a survey of how well the school and teaching is meeting the needs of all learners. In addition, the more individual review completed by older pupils; My Learning Portrait, highlights the child's own view of their learning and skills.
- The school has a robust Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Mindfulness sessions take place across the school to help all pupils develop their ability to focus, be resilient, calm and ready to learn. Part of this is the regular Brain Gym activities led by Diamond Class – the oldest pupils – at the end of each break time.
- From different surveys of how all pupils feel, staff monitor whether they feel that the support they receive does enable them to feel secure in school.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

There are a range of external agencies available for advice and in some cases sessions in school with a pupil. Those within the local authority may at times modify the nature of the service they provide. Contact with such an agency would only take place after consultation with a parent. Currently St Nicholas will consult as necessary;

- Links Outreach – advice for strategies related to behaviour
- Herts SpLD Team– dyslexia & dyscalculia training/ advice helpline
- Collette School Outreach – for advice strategies related to autism and behaviour
- Educational Psychology helpline and training
- Add-vance – ADHD support
- STEP2 CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- NHS ADHD referral
- Communication and Autism ISL Team
- Nessie in ED
- AskSali helpline
- DSPL7
- Educational Support for Medical Absence Team
- Delivering Special Provision Locally Team
- School Nurse
- Harpenden Partnership Plus – access to services such as counselling and Open Toybox therapy
- Local Optometrists and General Practitioners
- Herts Children Continuing Care team
- Child Paediatrician – Children’s Centre St Albans
- The Virtual School – Hertfordshire’s specialist team for Looked After Children
- Charities which have specific information related to pupils e.g. Changing Faces, Cruse Bereavement Care.
- Our weekly newsletter also regularly signposts parents to local workshops for parents.

Specialist advice or support is generally sought by the INCo via a referral process after discussion with the class teacher and the parent. A referral may require a cycle of assess, plan, do review evidence to be completed.

7. What training have the staff supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

- Our Inclusion Co-ordinator is a qualified teacher who holds the Certificate of Competence in Psychometric Testing Assessment and Access Arrangements (CPT3A) Level 7. Our INCo holds Registered Qualified Test User membership with the British Psychology Association as an Educational Ability/Attainment Test User. She regularly attends SEND Briefings presented by Hertfordshire Education Authority, and DSPL7 (Delivering Special Provision Locally) and other specialist training providers.
- External agencies may provide whole school training e.g. our linked Outreach Schools may give presentations at staff meetings.
- Teachers and Teaching Assistants attend courses out of school to extend their understanding of specific issues.
- The school has accessed county wide training for autism for all staff.
- The school has staff who have completed STEPs training to help ensure skilled behaviour management.

8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

- The first point of contact for any advice about how you can support your child's learning at home is the class teacher. They will be able to tell you what parts of the curriculum you could help consolidate and how; e.g. support for learning times tables or telling the time. Further advice or resources are available from the INCo who will liaise closely with the class teacher and ensure all communication is shared effectively.
- Parent Consultation Meetings will include suggestions for parental support.
- For those children on our SEND Register One Page Profiles will note provision which may include suggestions for consolidating learning at home.
- St Nicholas provides regular workshops for all parents to help them support their children's learning, in areas such as literacy, maths and broader issues related to well-being such as E-Safety.
- External workshops for parents are publicised in the weekly newsletter. Specific and relevant courses may be shared with parents individually from time to time.
- Informative books to support parents, either generally or related to specific learning difficulties, are recommended.
- Strategies that have been found to be effective for a child's learning in class are shared with parents. These may be strategies for learning or behaviour.
- Where necessary the INCo will make referrals to external agencies. Parents will be involved in making these referrals.
- The Headteacher meets regularly with parents via class coffee mornings. This helps gain feedback on how the school can continue to improve its provision and how parents and the school can work together to enhance the pupils' learning environment.

9. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

If your child requires additional support we would hope to be able to discuss this with you well before they join our school and make plans accordingly. For pupils in the school liaison with parents may be day-to-day information sharing or part of our calendar of more formal feedback regarding progress and learning.

- St Nicholas is an inclusive school. All pupils are involved in all activities recognising that reasonable adjustment may be needed to the activity to ensure every pupil can enjoy participating. This may involve day-to-day updates about a pupil's physical condition or planning ahead for experienced support staff to be available to accompany a pupil on an out of school trip. Day-to-day issues that arise related to a pupil's wellbeing that day can be shared informally with the member of the senior leadership team who will be on duty at morning drop off who will pass this information onto the class teacher straight away.
- Detailed information about progress is given at Parent Consultations.
- Copies of a pupil's One Page Profile with a termly priority target and resources to support it are sent home each term.
- The INCo is available for discussions during the school term. This is a 0.2 part-time role in our school so these meetings are by prior appointment.
- The INCo will use email to discuss day-to-day issues with parents, keeping the class teachers informed of any agreed actions.
- Parents come to meetings with external specialists to discuss progress e.g. OutReach Provision.
- Transition to Secondary School may involve discussions and planning with parents.
- Parents are invited to be part of wider discussions about the school via; participating in the Headteacher's meetings, standing as a Parent Governor, helping to fundraise for resources to enhance learning by joining the PTA (Parent Teacher Association).
- Parents may also be invited to complete anonymous questionnaires e.g. Disability Questionnaire.

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

- Reasonable adjustments are made so that all pupils can attend activities outside the class. This may involve additional adult support or changes to transport arrangements.
- Our sports day is a totally inclusive event with open-ended activities that all ages complete.
- As children progress through the classes, activities available are more exciting and challenging.
- A Risk Assessment is completed to ensure safety procedures are in place. The adult-staff ratio is always appropriate.
- Parental advice is sought when planning school trips.
- The pupil's own views are considered. Where a pupil is very reluctant to participate they will be encouraged to carry out another role within the event.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

- St Nicholas School is in a Victorian building built on a slope and located centrally in Harpenden. There are steps on the ground floor and two classrooms are upstairs. It has a small enclosed playground and there is minimal parking for teaching staff only.
- Wherever possible adjustments would be considered to help accommodate a pupil with SEND e.g. sourcing and installing special sound systems, additional support for visual impairment, adjustments to furniture.
- We continue to review accessibility annually and report this on the Action Plan for the school's Equality Policy.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

- For information about SEN - the Inclusion Co-ordinator, Mrs Broekhuis
- For information about school policy - the Headteacher, Mrs Crouch
- For information about the admissions procedure - the School Secretary, Mrs Meader.

Telephone 01582 623620

13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

- For pupils joining the Reception class visits are arranged in the summer term before entry. They meet the Year 6 pupil who will be their Buddy and help them to settle in. For these children there is a staggered start doing half day at first, then staying for lunch and then doing full days.
- For Year 6 pupils moving onto Secondary School transition visits to the new school take place and Secondary School staff meet in person or virtually with the INCo to have a hand over meeting.
- If necessary additional visits to the new school can be made by the pupil accompanied by parent or where agreed a member of staff.
- A transition book may be made by the pupil to help prepare them over the summer holiday.
- Information is shared between the schools with direct liaison between respective SEN staff concerning key pupils.

14. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

- Teaching Assistants (TA) play a key role in supporting the teaching and learning at our school. They are a highly valued and respected part of the whole teaching team. The hours of TA support in any class is a reflection of the needs of that cohort of pupils. In any one class there will be various pupils with different SEN.
- Each term the INCo and Headteacher meets with each class team to review the needs of all pupils on our SEND register. In addition, pupils who are also being monitored for progress, where there are concerns around SEN are also discussed and tracked. Provision of reasonable adjustments in class and available extra adult support is allocated during this time. If a pupil receives support "out of class", it may be for a specific period e.g. 6 weeks. It must be noted that the INCo and SEND TA roles are part-time. The majority of pupils with SEND in our school, have their teaching needs met in the class by effectively differentiated teaching and provision through reasonable adjustments. It is important to consider that many SEND pupils will be average or above average ability in certain areas of the curriculum. In some cases differentiation in class may be to meet the needs of very able pupils with SEN.
- There is a budget each financial year to purchase new SEN resources. These may be general consumables such as pencils and pens with specific grips or items for specific pupils such as a writing slope, wobble cushion, widget software etc.
- Liaison with the school before applying for a place at St Nicholas is very important to ensure that funding, advice or resources can be applied for well before the pupil joins the school. Also, specific staff training may need to be undertaken.

15. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

- Where there is a medical need or known SEN information in advance from parents, may indicate that additional support is needed.
- As noted each term, a meeting is held with each Class Teacher, the INCo, and the Headteacher. The progress of children is discussed. This information is shared with parents via Parent Consultation meetings or a report. If a pupil is not making expected progress based on their achievements in the previous stage of their education, reasonable adjustments or in class support may be planned to further support their learning. This level of support may be increased or decreased at the end of the term or during the following term, again based on the teacher's knowledge of the child's progress.
- Where external agencies give advice on supporting a pupil's learning, again the intervention may be increased or decreased based on their specialist input. For example, a pupil who is receiving a 6 week block of Speech and Language therapy sessions during the school day maybe discharged with some on-going advice or activities to home and school about modelling correct pronunciation.
- Parents are invited to meetings with therapists to discuss changes to support being received.
- Parents are informed of any additional in-class support their child is receiving by the Class Teacher.
- If a pupil is to receive a short block of regular additional support out of the class they will be informed by the Class Teacher.

16. How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?

Hertfordshire Education Authority provide information to inform parents on their website <http://www.thegrid.org/localoffer>

Glossary

CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Part of the NHS. Referral to their services is usually via a GP or specialist Paediatrician.
One Page Profile	One Page Profile. Schools are no longer required to provide Individual education Plans for pupils with special educational needs. However, many schools find it a useful way of considering specific next steps for a pupil with special educational needs and communicating termly support with parents.

INCo	Inclusion Co-ordinator. A person in the school responsible for managing special educational needs provision and ensuring effective inclusion for all pupils. In some schools the role of managing special educational needs is carried out by a SENCo – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
SALT	Speech and Language Therapist
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty. This term includes a range of issues which can impact on a pupil's learning such as; Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Autistic Spectrum Difficulties. Such conditions are entirely separate from a pupil's underlying cognitive ability. However without support they can form significant barriers that prevent him/her learning to their full potential.
TA	Teaching Assistant