

St Thomas of Canterbury Church of England Infant School

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Special Educational Needs Information Report

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years (DfE, July 2014) requires schools to publish information for pupils, parents and carers about special educational needs provision. We hope this document will answer the key questions you may have about special educational needs at our school.

The information in this document also contributes to the Local Offer for Essex. You can find further information about the Local Offer or view the Local Offer at www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk. For further information about special educational needs provision in our school we refer you to our Special Educational Needs Policy. The school prospectus contains a summary of the Special Educational Needs Policy and the full policy is available on our school website: www.stthomasofcanterburyinfantschool.co.uk. We welcome comments and suggestions from parents regarding the school's SEN policy.

1. What kind of Special Educational Needs are provided for at St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School?

At our school we strive to provide a supportive environment and challenging curriculum for all learners, taking into account their individual needs.

Each year we provide for the wide range of special educational needs of our children. The needs for all children with special educational needs, fall under four broad areas:

- communication and interaction (including speech and language needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorders)
- cognition and learning (children who learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation, or have a specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia)
- social, emotional and mental health difficulties (including children displaying challenging behaviour due to underlying difficulties, and children with disorders such as Attention Deficit Disorder)
- sensory and/or physical needs (such as a visual impairment or physical disability).

2. How does the school know if my child has Special Educational Needs?

Some children will start school with special educational needs already identified; however, this is not always the case. At St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School we recognise the importance of identifying special educational needs as early as possible to ensure appropriate support is put in place. In order to do this we follow steps to identify,

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assess and provide for the needs of any children who may have special educational needs. This process is outlined below.

Step 1

Every child's education will be planned for by the classteacher, differentiated accordingly to suit the child's individual needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or learning support assistants in class. If your child is not making the expected progress despite this general class differentiation the classteacher will reflect on your child's learning using our 'Class Action' document format to consider whether they may need additional support and/or whether adjustments need to be made to the learning environment.

Step 2

Further information will be gathered through appropriate assessments and observation and your child's learning will be monitored closely, comparing their progress in all areas to their peers. The SENCO and classteacher will consider the information gathered in relation to discussions with you and your child, and decide whether your child needs support that is different to or additional to that provided to the rest of their peers. If additional or different support is needed then your child will start receiving 'SEN Support'. Your child's progress and provision will continue to be monitored and reviewed and, if necessary, external agencies may be contacted to offer specialist advice or assessments. You will meet regularly with the classteacher and/or SENCO to discuss your child's learning.

Step 3

Most children's needs will be met through this 'SEN Support'. However, if, despite taking relevant and purposeful action to meet the needs of your child, they have not made expected progress, we will discuss with you the possibility of requesting an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment. If after discussion we decide to request an EHC assessment the local authority will decide whether it is necessary for it to make provision in accordance with an EHC plan. The purpose of an EHC plan is to meet the special educational needs of the child or young person, to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care and, as they get older, prepare them for adulthood.

3. How does St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School meet the needs of children with SEN?

We welcome all children to our school and are committed to ensuring that appropriate provision is made to cater for their individual needs, meaning that all children make the best possible progress. Providing high quality teaching on a daily basis, adapting and differentiating the curriculum accordingly, is the first step in meeting the individual needs of all children. Beyond this, each learner identified as having SEN is entitled to support that is 'additional to or different from' a typical differentiated curriculum. The type of support is dependent on the individual learning needs, and changes every year, as our learners and their needs change. This support may be in the form of resources, additional classroom support from a learning support assistant or a small group or 1:1 intervention programme led by a learning support assistant, the SENCO or a specialist. Wherever possible we aim to provide support within the classroom setting.

Examples of resources available at our school include:

- Writing slopes - to support an effective posture for writing



- Pencil grips - to support effective grip and reduce fatigue when writing



- Move 'n' sit cushions to aid concentration when sitting



- Therapy putty - to develop hand strength



- Fidget toys - to aid focus and attention



- Physiotherapy "Peanut" Roll - to improve motor skills and balance



At St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School we currently have a Learning Support Assistant available every afternoon to provide additional SEN support, either classroom based support or intervention programmes.

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Examples of intervention programmes available at our school include:

- Lego Group play therapy – developing social skills
- Time to Talk – developing oral and social interaction skills
- Small group Letters and Sounds sessions – developing phonic skills
- Precision Teaching and Monitoring – improving fluency of Maths and English skills
- Gym Trail – developing gross and fine motor skills

The length of time of the intervention may vary according to need but will be monitored regularly. Interventions will be reviewed by the SENCO to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning.

For children identified as having special educational needs we follow a graduated approach to provision following the ‘Assess, Plan, Do, Review’ model. Using the assessment information gathered the provision for the individual child will be planned in consultation with the child themselves, and you as parents/carers. An individual support plan will then be written outlining the support and interventions that will be put in place and the intended outcomes of the support. This plan will then be put into action and reviewed at least termly with children and parents/carers. If a child’s needs are more complex they may also have an Education Health and Care Plan which will outline longer term intended outcomes and be reviewed annually. This review process will also involve any external agencies which are involved in supporting the child.

4. How will school take account of my child’s needs and make sure my child is able to access the environment and curriculum?

As a school we are committed to ensuring all children have equal access to the school curriculum and environment. This may involve adapting the environment by installing handrails or slopes, or providing specialist equipment such as magnifiers, specialist seating or writing slopes. When a child needs specific resources or equipment to access the school environment and/or curriculum they can be accessed in two ways. First, it may be provided by Health (NHS) through loan from occupational therapists or physiotherapists, or by the Local Authority via specialist teachers. Otherwise, it may be provided by the school’s own resource budget. The Headteacher and SENCO are responsible for the management of resourcing for special educational needs provision within the school and are happy to meet with parents to discuss particular needs and requirements for individual pupils.

For further information please refer to the Accessibility Plan available via the school office.

5. How will the school prepare and support my child when joining or transferring to a new school?

The Early Years Foundation Stage Manager, Headteacher and SENCO arrange visits and talk with staff from feeder pre-schools in the summer term to aid the transition of new children to the school. For children with an Education Health and Care Plan, parents are encouraged to arrange extra visits to the school during the summer term to support transition.

Records of planning and provision are transferred to the relevant SENCO at the end of a November 2016

child's time at our school. In addition, year 2 staff meet with year 3 staff from St Thomas of Canterbury Junior School in the summer term, to discuss children in the current year 2 classes, prior to the children transferring to the Junior School in September of that year. The Infant and Junior school SENCOs also meet in the summer term to discuss children transferring to the Junior School. Staff from both schools also arrange extra visits of staff and children between the two schools as appropriate, to support the transition of specific children with special educational needs.

6. What training and expertise do the staff at St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School have?

The SENCO, Mrs Taylor, holds the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination and also attends regular meetings to receive updates of current developments in special educational needs.

The SENCO, classteachers, and Learning Support Assistants have a wealth of experience and attend relevant courses which keep them updated and skilled in areas applicable to their own and our children's needs. On-going training and development of staff is also delivered by the SENCO.

Recent training received by members of staff includes:

- Level 2 Autism Education Trust training
- Sensory training
- Precision Teaching and Monitoring to support learning
- ELKLAN Speech and Language Training.

7. What if my child needs specialist support?

External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for children with special educational needs. This support may be provided by:

- Speech and Language Therapists and Technicians
- Educational Psychologists
- Occupational Therapists
- Physiotherapists
- Specialist Teachers.

Support from these services can be accessed via a school referral or may also be accessible through your GP. Parents are informed if any outside agency is involved with the support of their child.

We are also able to access additional services from the Brentwood Local Delivery Group - Extended Services to support children and families through difficult periods.

8. How does the school know it is meeting the needs of my child effectively?

The progress of children with special educational needs is reviewed termly by classteachers and the SENCO, and is also monitored by the senior leadership team, to ensure the expected progress is being made. Progress will be compared to the rest of the cohort as well as national expectations. The provision for children with special

educational needs is also reviewed termly by the classteachers and the SENCO to ensure the most appropriate resources and teaching methods are being used to support your child. Progress and provision are discussed on a termly basis with children and with parents/carers at review meetings.

The school governors are also responsible for monitoring special educational needs within the school and do so through regular reports and/or visits.

9. If my child has SEN how will I be consulted and informed about their education?

As a school we value the contribution of our parents in their children's education. Our aim is to develop a partnership where professionals and parents work together in the best interests of the child. We welcome the involvement of parents through their support of their children at home, as well as using their own knowledge, skills and talents to support children within school. The school encourages an active partnership through an on-going open dialogue with parents. The home-school agreement is central to this. Classteachers discuss any concerns regarding a child's educational needs with parents, and parents are informed when a teacher considers that a child's needs are significant enough for him/her to be placed on the SEN register. At this point a meeting will be arranged for the child, the teaching staff and the parents to discuss how the child can be best supported in the future. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the meeting and to share their experiences of their child's learning in the home environment. Following the meeting, a support plan will be developed for the child, using the information obtained prior to and during the meeting. The support plan will detail the educational support which will be provided at school as well as ideas of how the child can be supported at home. Where appropriate, resources will also be provided to support the child's learning at home. As a school we actively encourage parents to contribute to the content of these support plans through our termly review meetings. At these meetings we review each child's progress and discuss future outcomes and provision.

Parents are also always welcome to speak to the SENCO at any mutually convenient time. We encourage parents to share their views with us through the 'information from parents' form that is sent out prior to the termly reviews, through parent questionnaires, during the termly coffee morning for parents and through continuous open dialogue. The school also informs parents of any outside intervention, such as visits from outside agencies.

As a school, we are very proud of the relationship we have with our parents. The following comments are a few examples provided by parents on our last parent questionnaire:

"The meeting I had was very informative and positive towards goals for my son. I feel that he has already come a long way in his progress."

"I couldn't be happier with the school for giving us the best start we could have."

"My daughter has received amazing support from the school. She has come along loads this year."

"My son has progressed really well and I owe it to all the staff who put in so much effort to get him where he is today, a massive thanks!"

10. If my child has Special Educational Needs, how will school consult them and involve them in their education?

Children with SEN at St Thomas of Canterbury Infant School are actively involved in their provision at the earliest possible stage. All classteachers review children's progress with them as the starting point of the review process. Children are asked for their views and suggestions about their progress and support, and teachers also share their own views and suggestions with the children. This process is supported and guided by classteachers in varying degrees, depending on the age and maturity of each child. These discussions then form the basis of the review meetings with parents. Where suitable children are also invited to be part of the 'one planning' meetings. Through this process children have a better awareness of their progress and have ownership of the learning.

In addition, the School Council represents the student body, meeting regularly with senior members of staff to discuss suggestions and decisions relating to their education. All children in year 2 are able to put themselves forward to be members of the school council and are elected by democratic pupil vote. Any child can put their views and suggestions forward via the school council members.

11. Who can I speak to at school if I am concerned about my child's development, or about my child's Special Educational Needs?

- Your child's **classteacher**. You can either speak to your child's classteacher at the classroom door, or if you prefer, make an appointment via the school office on 01277 223606.
- **The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO)** - Mrs Adelle Taylor. Mrs Taylor works 1.5 days a week in the role of SENCO but is also available at other times for meetings or informal conversations with parents. She is contactable in person either at the classroom door, by phone via the school office on 01277 223606, or via email at mrstaylor@stthomasinf.essex.sch.uk
- **The Headteacher** - Mrs Caroline L'Estrange is contactable via the school office on 01277 223606.
- **Governor responsible for Special Educational Needs** - Mrs Nichola Harman can be contacted via the school office on 01277 223606.

12. What if I have a complaint?

We encourage parents to raise any concerns with staff as early as possible so that any issues can be swiftly resolved. If parents have a concern they feel has not been noted by the school, or if there is a complaint regarding the SEN provision their child is receiving, we encourage parents to initially see their child's classteacher. The classteacher will then liaise with other appropriate staff, so that concerns can be dealt with as soon as possible. If any issues are not resolved, parents should arrange to meet with the SENCO to discuss their concerns. In the unlikely event that problems still persist then parents should refer to the latest School Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available from the school office on request.

13. Where else can I find further information or support?

Further information about special educational needs or support for families with children with special educational needs or disabilities:

Essex Local Authority

www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Special-Education-Needs/Pages/Special-Educational-Needs.aspx

Essex County Council's information pages about special educational needs.

Essex Local Offer

<http://www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/>

A website that details the provision and services available in the area, for children and young people with special educational needs.

BBC

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/parents/school_education/

A website with advice for parents about supporting your child's education, including information about special educational needs.

SNAP (Special Needs And Parents)

SNAP is a registered charity based in Brentwood that helps Essex families with children and young people who have special needs and disabilities.

www.snapcharity.org

Tel: 01277 211300

Email: info@snapcharity.org

The SNAP Centre, Pastoral Way, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5WF

FACE (Families Acting for Change Essex)

FACE is an organisation run by parents and represents the views and experiences of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs to influence the services they receive in Essex. Membership of FACE is free and gives access to current information and the chance to contribute to focus groups and consultations and to become more involved in any way that suits you and your family.

www.face-essex.org

Tel: 01245 608231

Email: info@face-essex.org

FACE, Moulsham Mill, Parkway, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 7PX

Families in Focus (Essex)

A parent led charity providing support to families of children with disabilities and special needs (aged 0 to 19) across Essex, who require advice, information and support, particularly at times of change, challenge and crisis.

www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Tel: 01245 353575

Email: helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Lancaster House, 140 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0EB

Dyslexia Action

A national charity, with a centre in Chelmsford, that aims to support adults and children with dyslexia and literacy difficulties.

www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Tel: 01245 259656

Email: Chelmsford@dyslexiaaction.org.uk

10A Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1HL

Parent Partnership Service

Parent Partnership Services (PPS) offer free, impartial and confidential advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs. They are a statutory service which means there has to be one in every local authority.

www.essex.gov.uk/parentpartnership

Tel: 01245 436036

Email: Parentpartnership@essex.gov.uk

Education and Lifelong Learning (SEN), Education and Learning Services,
2nd Floor E Block, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1LD

Larchwood Children's Centre

Offers a range of services to families with children aged 5 years and under.

www.essexcentre.info/larchwood

Tel: 01277 374912

Email: brentwood&billericaychildrenscentres@barnardos.org.uk

Larchwood Primary, Larchwood Gardens, Pilgrim's Hatch, CM15 9NG

You may also be able to access support via your local GP surgery or via the School Nurse (contact via the school office - 01277 223606).