



SEN Information Report

1. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help?

All children at St Thomas More are closely monitored to ensure they make progress. Teachers, the Head of School and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) monitor and assess each child's rate of progress at regular pupil progress meetings. If a child fails to make the expected levels of progress or if he/she shows a difficulty with their learning, initially the class teacher will talk to you as parents. We know when pupils need help if:

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers or teachers
- Limited progress in being made in accordance with age related expectations
- There is a change in the pupil's behaviour or progress
- Concerns are raised by external agencies (e.g. GP or school nurse)
- Information is provided from a previous setting

After a review of the child's needs with everyone involved, the teacher and SENDCo will put in place appropriate targets and specific support through quality first teaching, small group support or individual support depending on level of need. If progress continues to be less than expected, it may be necessary to carry out more in depth assessments of the child's needs, possibly involving external agencies and specialists. This will be supported by the SENDCo and the views of the parents and child will be considered throughout the process.

2. What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

If you suspect that your child may have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), please contact the class teacher in the first instance to share your observations and concerns. If necessary, you will then be referred onto the school SENDCo (Mrs Caroline Manning). Further discussions may then take place between all relevant parties to determine the best way forward for your child.

3. How will school staff support my child?

Class teachers and the SENDCo will assess your child's specific needs and provide relevant personalised support. Suitable adaptations will be put in place to allow your child to progress in their learning. Adaptations may include:

- Quality first teaching – adapting and differentiating the curriculum accordingly
- Graduated response – Assess Plan Do Review cycle
- Adapted/specialist furniture and resources, e.g. sensory objects, pencil grips, sloped writing surfaces
- Small group or individual support from trained teaching assistants and learning support assistants, guided by the SENDCo and teachers – targeted intervention programmes and delivery of specialist programmes such as speech and language therapy, Attention Autism, Drawing and Talking, LEGO therapy
- Playground support for less structured times of the day

Some children may be identified as requiring additional support within a targeted intervention group or on a 1:1 basis. A SEND support plan (Assess Plan Do Review plan) containing specific targets may be put in place (usually where a child is receiving regular intervention from an external professional e.g Speech and Language Therapist, DESC). All interventions are planned to meet the needs of the group or the individual. The SENCO monitors and assesses the impact of all the interventions that take place and meets with the Teaching Assistants and Class Teachers to discuss the children's progress. Class Teachers and Teaching

Assistants work very closely to plan the interventions and the SENCO offers advice and support for all the class teachers and Teaching Assistants. A nominated school governor is responsible for overseeing the SEND provision, to ensure that quality of provision is closely monitored

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

For children who are supported through a SEND support plan (APDR form), parents will be provided with an opportunity to discuss the progress made towards individual targets and set new targets. Parents and children are encouraged to be involved in these discussions with the SENCO. These discussions will take place termly for children in Y1 – 6 and half termly for children in nursery and reception. Children will be invited to share their view on the support they have received and how this could be modified. The outcome of the review meetings will allow the school to make adjustments to the provision as required. Some children will be receiving extra support, but a SEND support plan (Assess Plan Do Review form) may not be required as this will be detailed on the whole class Provision Map for that specific year group. In this case, their progress will be discussed at Parent Consultation Evenings and parents will receive an overview of the interventions their child will receive each term. Parents may make an appointment with their child's Class Teacher and/or SENCO/Head of School at any time during the year to discuss their child's provision and progress. Those parents who have children working with outside agencies, may be asked to attend further meetings to review the provision and the impact it is having on their child's learning and development. Following the meeting, parents and the school will receive a written report from the outside agency.

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

The school adopts a graduated approach to the identification and assessment of pupils with SEND. This approach is followed when allocating provision for specific pupils. Pupils may move between the levels of support depending on current level of need:

- Quality First Teaching – the class teacher plans an education to meet the broad needs of each individual, differentiating tasks accordingly and sometimes including additional in class support from teaching assistants and the teacher.
- Additional Need – If a child's needs are specific to a particular area of the curriculum, they may be included in an intervention group following a specific programme led by a teaching assistant. The length of time the intervention runs will depend on the level of need and the type of programme being implemented. The impact of the intervention will be monitored closely by the class teacher and the SENDCo to inform future planning and will be recorded as part of the APDR cycle.
- Higher Need (SEN Support) – If the pupil has a higher level of needs, this may require additional SEN support and external agencies and specialists may need to be called in to work with the school, child and parents.
- Complex Needs – If a child has complex SEND, a formal assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan may be carried out.

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

We recognise that some pupils may have additional social, emotional and mental health needs. We understand that these may present themselves in different ways, i.e. through behavioural difficulties or heightened anxiety. The school has a named Mental Health Lead (Caroline Manning) who will work with children and families to support any emerging needs. The school follows the Hertfordshire Steps approach to positive behaviour management and staff are training accordingly to deliver this. Some pupils may have a specific member of staff allocated to them to discuss their worries or concerns. It may be necessary to involve outside agencies e.g, CAMHS, DESC, school nurse, Family Support Worker or for pupils to have access to the schools counselling service.

If a multi-agency approach is required to meet a child or family's needs, parents may be advised to set up a FFA (Families First Assessment) with the SENDCo or School Family Worker – this would ensure regular meetings are held with all agencies involved with the family and child through Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings.

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

The SENDCo liaises regularly with a range of external agencies and specialists. We may feel it necessary to refer pupils to an external specialist for additional support and advice, to ensure the child's needs are being met fully through tailored strategies and approaches personalised for each individual child. Referrals will first be discussed with you as parents. The school is able to complete a wide range of referrals, but you may have to be directed through the GP for some specific services. Our links with outside agencies include:

- Specific Learning Difficulties Base
- Early Years Advisory Teacher
- Communications and Autism Team (including the Advisory Teacher for Autism)
- Speech and Language Therapist
- Dacorum Education Support Centre (DESC), etc.
- Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Educational Psychology Service
- School Family Support Worker

More information on these services is available on the Hertfordshire Local Offer.

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

There is a continual cycle of professional development for all staff in school. The SENDCo is currently undertaking the National Award for SENDCos. Staff access CPD for SEND when relevant and there is regular in-staff training for addressing the needs of pupils with SEND. Some examples of more recent training include the following:

- The SENDCo attends and termsly cluster groups for updates to SEND and resources/provision available locally
- The majority of teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) have attended training for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and ADHD
- A number of support staff have received training in developing and leading social skills groups
- We have regular contact with the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Base who train staff to deliver individual tailored programmes when pupils are referred there for assessment, e.g. for Dyslexia/ Dyscalculia
- Staff regularly attend training at the SpLD Base for delivery of group intervention programmes and general resource and activity updates
- Teaching staff attend the SpLD Base when necessary if a child is causing concern, to receive specific advice and strategies to implement
- Physiotherapists and Occupational Therapists offer training to staff in the delivery of motor skills programmes (for both individual programmes and group interventions)
- Teachers and TAs attend the Outreach sessions at Woodfield Primary School for specialist advice and support regarding specific pupils
- The Speech and Language Therapists train individual TAs in the delivery of individual programmes for specific pupils
- Staff have had Zones of Regulation training and this is used to support all children within the school
- Staff have had CAPPS and Tray Activity training in order to assess small steps of progress and plan relevant activities
- SENCo and LSA are LEGO therapy trained
- SENCo and LSA have undertaken Mental Health training
- SENCo is Attention Autism trained
- The Headteacher and SENDCo hold regular monthly TA meetings in order for support staff to have up to date training and to share good practice

- Training for all staff is refreshed regularly and as needs arise.

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

Children are set regular age appropriate homework tasks to complete with parents involving reading, writing, phonics, maths or topic work for example. Tasks set will either prepare pupils for an upcoming topic or reinforce what is currently being delivered in class.

Your child will receive high quality teaching from their class teacher, which may then be supplemented by targeted provision and additional support. Children may be identified as having a specific need and may require additional support in school, either within a small group or possibly on a one to one basis. The main long-term aim is to encourage the child to become independent within a whole class setting, therefore the small group or one to one support will be tailored to provide the child with the tools to achieve this.

The school runs regular parent workshops and curriculum evenings in order to keep parents fully informed about current methods and resources.

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

Parents of pupils with SEND in Y1 - 6 meet termly SENDCo for updates on their child's progress. Parents of pupils in nursery and reception will be invited to meet half-termly. When a pupil is identified as having a new Special Educational Need, parents may be invited in by the SENDCo to discuss the options available for the child and the outside agencies which could be involved to help support the child and parents in moving forward. If external specialists come into school to work with your child, parents will often be called in to receive feedback following the session.

All parents are invited to attend the two parent's evenings per year (Autumn and Spring terms) and the open event in the Summer term. These are the main opportunities in the year to hold formal discussions with class teachers.

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

Children with all levels of physical and learning disability are encouraged to participate as fully as possible in all outdoor activities, including sports events and school trips. Where relevant, risk assessments are completed in advance of the activity taking place and reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate each child's needs. This may include adjustments being made to the level of adult support, the physical environment or the resources available to make the activity more accessible. The child's needs are addressed in a sensitive and appropriate manner.

12. How accessible is the school environment?

The school is fully compliant with the Equality Act and reasonable adjustments are made for all pupils with SEND. Specialist equipment can be provided where necessary and advice is sought from the appropriate medical and health professionals to ensure all children's medical and health needs are catered for within the school environment.

13. Who can I contact for further information?

Your child's class teacher is available to address any initial concerns and they may then refer you onto the SENDCo for a further meeting. The Headteacher and SEND Governors are also available for meetings if necessary – meetings can be arranged via the school office.

- Executive Head – Mrs Kathy Little
- Head of School – Mrs Michelle Anderton
- SENDCo/INCo – Mrs Caroline Manning
- SEND Governor – Mr Swarbrick

14. 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?

We recognise that stages of transition are important in each child's life. Therefore, we have a range of procedures in place to ease periods of transition to meet a variety of needs:

- Transition visits for new pupils joining our school
- Transition visits for pupils joining specialist schools from our setting
- Transition mornings for all pupils moving up to their new class (these take place at the end of the Summer term)
- Transition visits for Y6 pupils moving up to Secondary
- Liaison with SENDCos at local primary and secondary schools
- Detailed transition plans for pupils with SEND moving between key stages and from class to class
- Transition meetings with parents and pupils to discuss upcoming changes
- Transition books with photos to use at home to familiarise pupils with their new class
- Social stories to prepare and plan for the move to a new classroom or setting
- SENDCo works with outside agencies, e.g. DESC, to arrange additional transition visits and one to one preparation sessions

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

The school has an amount identified within its overall budget called the Notional SEN Budget. This is used for resources to support the progress of children with SEND, e.g. to provide specialised training for staff, buy specialist equipment, books or stationery or employ Teaching Assistants to support learning. Where a child requires provision which exceeds the nationally prescribed threshold, the school can apply for additional top-up funding through the local authority (known as Local High Needs Block Funding which can be allocated for one, two or three terms). Termly pupil progress meetings form part of the planning for the allocation of the school's resources so that all children with SEND are at the centre of this decision making process.

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

We have a large team of skilled Teaching Assistants (TAs) whose role it is to work with and support small groups and individuals, as well as offer support within whole class teaching sessions. The support of our TAs is allocated across the school according to need of each cohort. The amount and type of support will be determined by individual barriers to learning and current progress, therefore the level of support will be adjusted accordingly. All interventions are time limited and are reviewed and monitored to ensure they are appropriate and are having an impact on each child. Our aim is to support each child to access the curriculum whilst becoming an independent learner.

17. 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 County Council's Local Offer can be accessed online at www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer

(St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and Nursery, Updated September 2022)

