



'Loving to Learn, Learning to Love'



Special Educational Needs **Information Report**

Last Approved: January 2025

Review Date: January 2026

School Information and Context

St Mark's CE Primary School is committed to providing inclusive education for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). As a mainstream school, it offers appropriate support for these children. Every teacher is responsible for the learning and progress of all pupils, including those with SEND

St Mark's Nursery, located at a different site within Thomas Boughey Children's Centre, also follows this approach.

School Address

Main site

Wood Terrace
Shelton
Stoke on Trent
ST1 4LR

Nursery Class

College Road
Shelton
Stoke on Trent
ST4 2DQ

Phone Number

01782 234411

Phone Number

01782 237125

Head Teacher- Mrs D. Sadler

Deputy Head Teacher – Mrs S. Goodwin

Inclusion Leader (SENDCO) - Miss J. Thomas

Teacher in charge of Nursery – Mrs L. Bradbury

Home School Links Worker(s) – Mrs S. Khan (Main site) & Mrs S. Malik (Nursery)

School website - www.stmarksprimary.org.uk

The Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO) at St Mark's CE Primary School is Miss J. Thomas.

Miss Thomas was appointed as SENDCO in January 2018 and is a member of the senior leadership team in school.

The SENDCO can be contacted via the school office by telephone on 01782 234411 or by email office@stmarks.orchardct.org.uk

St. Mark's CE Primary School is a larger than average primary school with a very high percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils who have a first language other than English.

What kinds of SEND does the school provide for?

The Special Educational Needs 'Code of Practice' (2014 and updated January 2015) states that there are four main areas of need. These areas are as follows:

- Cognition and Learning
- Communication and Interaction
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health
- Sensory and/or physical

The school provides for a range of needs within these areas. Some pupils may have needs in more than one area and needs can change over time.

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

Evidence of a child's need in one of these areas may come from a variety of sources, including concerns raised by parents or the class teacher, information from a previous school or setting, lack of progress in school, a medical diagnosis, or assessments conducted by the SENDCO or external professionals such as a Speech and Language Therapist or Educational Psychologist. These diverse inputs help build a complete picture of the child's needs, ensuring the appropriate support is provided.

We aim to identify additional needs as early as possible and involve parents in the process. If parents have concerns about their child's potential special educational needs, they are encouraged to speak with the class teacher or arrange a meeting with the Inclusion Leader (SENDCO) or the Nursery Lead to discuss their concerns and explore appropriate support.

How will school staff support my child?

At St Mark's CE Primary School, every teacher is responsible for every child, including those with SEN. We follow a graduated approach to supporting pupils, starting with high-quality teaching. The 'Assess, plan, do' process will be followed to address any concerns and to provide evidence in readiness for further support from specialists and other professionals if required. Those who need additional support may complete a programme in a small group, which will usually be for 10-12 weeks. Some pupils requiring intensive support may receive one-on-one assistance for certain parts of the curriculum. Any recommendations from professionals will be seamlessly integrated into the teaching approach. Additionally, parents will be engaged at every stage of the process to ensure a collaborative effort in supporting the child's learning and development.

Teaching Support Assistants, bilingual assistants, and learning mentors play a vital role in enhancing the learning experiences of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those learning English as an additional language. While these support staff provide essential assistance, teachers remain accountable for the progress of all pupils, including those with SEND, ensuring that effective teaching and support strategies are in place, regardless of the level of assistance provided by Teaching Assistants or specialist staff.

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

St Mark's curriculum is tailored to reflect the interests and needs of each class. Lessons are adapted, with activities and questions for all groups or individuals as needed. The work is carefully matched to both the age and ability level of the children. Some pupils may require specific resources, such as coloured overlays, pencil grips, or sloped writing boards. In addition, educational technology, including computer programs and apps, may be used to further support learning. If a child is identified as having a special need, they will be given a pupil passport. Targets will be set according to their area of need. These will be monitored by the class teacher weekly and the SENDCO three times per year. Teaching assistants may be allocated to work with the pupil as a 1:1 or in small focus group to target more specific needs.

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

Children in nursery are observed while they are playing at adult led activities and their own choice play activities. This information is used to compile each child's "Early Learning Journey". Parents meet regularly with key workers and with the teacher in charge to talk about how their child is getting on. The discussion includes their health and wellbeing, their learning and any family circumstances that may be affecting them. Parents, children and the teacher compile a "pupil passport" to summarise their child's needs. Children with SEND will have short term targets set. Detailed developmental charts are used to help us to identify next steps for the children. Pupils development is also assessed using the 'Stoke Speaks Out Development Tool'.

The progress of all pupils is monitored through pupil progress meetings termly where class teachers discuss the progress of all children with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Inclusion Leader. Parents are consulted in a variety of ways including consultation evenings, informal discussions and structured conversations. Review meetings are held for children with additional needs and strategies to support them are agreed. These are shared with parents. Learning logs are used to provide a variety of homework tasks. Class teachers are always willing to discuss ways in which you can support your child.

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

The school has a nurturing ethos based on the values of RESPECT. (Responsibility, equality, spirituality, perseverance, enthusiasm, commitment and trust).

As a church school, we have close links with St Mark's church. Each class has a reflection area and a prayer room is available for children of all faiths or none to use at break and lunchtimes. Collective worship is inclusive and sensitive to the needs of children from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. A range of after school clubs are offered where children can extend their learning and try new skills.

There is a consistent behaviour management policy and every day is a fresh start. Our two Learning Mentors are able to support children with emotional or social needs.

In our Nursery class, key workers are always sensitive to children's emotional needs. Children are able to access before and after school care with Thomas Boughey Kindergarten, which is also situated within the Thomas Boughey Children's Centre.

Where appropriate, Early Help and referrals to outside agencies are available for families.

Pupils with medical needs

Pupils with medical needs will be provided with a detailed Health Care Plan, compiled by the school with support from appropriate health professionals and in partnership with parents and if appropriate, the pupil themselves. Staff who administer medicine complete training and are signed off by the school nurse as competent. All medicine administration procedures adhere to the LA policy and DfE guidelines included within Statutory Guidance on Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (December 2015)

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

Staff are able to deliver a range of intervention programmes including communication, English and maths programmes and support for children learning English as an additional language.

St. Mark's employs Bilingual Teaching Assistants (Currently we have Urdu, Panjabi, Polish and Czech speakers).

A range of specialist services can be accessed including

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Service (SEND)
- Autism Outreach Team
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Hearing Impairment Team
- Visual Impairment Team
- Educational Psychologist Service
- Educational Welfare Officer
- Children and Young People's Services
- School Health
- Co-operative Working
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Outreach support from Watermill & Kemball special schools. (Special schools within the Orchard Community Trust).

Referrals can be made to special school outreach for children with Education, Health and Care Plans.

Educational Psychology support is sought for individual pupils where required. The Educational Psychologist would normally only work directly with pupils whose needs are quite considerable and who have not responded well to the interventions previously put in place for them. This involvement is planned by the SENDCO with the permission of parents/carers. In order to help understand the pupil's educational needs better, the psychologist will generally meet with the parent and give feedback after the assessment has been completed. The Educational Psychologist will offer advice to the school and parent/carers on how to best support the pupil in order to take their learning forward.

The school is able to access support from specialist teachers and advisers from SEND Services.

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

Staff have the appropriate professional qualifications for their role.

All staff have level 1 training on safeguarding children and are updated regularly in staff meetings. First Aid training is updated regularly. Several staff have received training in Paediatric First Aid. All staff have received asthma training and relevant staff have been trained in epilepsy awareness, or training specific to complex medical conditions as required.

Several members of staff are trained in manual handling and some have attended Safety Intervention training (previously known as MAPA)

Staff have been trained in the use of a wide variety of intervention programmes to support children's learning in house and externally.

New staff receive in-house support as part of their induction process.

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

St Mark's is an inclusive school which endeavours to provide opportunities for all children to participate in activities including visits and clubs. When planning visits, children's needs are considered and where necessary adjustments are made or additional support provided in consultation with parents. Where this is not possible, every effort will be made to provide a suitable alternative. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable children to participate. If the school or a health and safety risk assessment suggests that a child requires 1:1 support due to their particular needs the school are able to provide this.

How accessible is the setting/school/college environment?

The nursery class is within Thomas Boughy Children's Centre, which was built in 2005 and conforms to building regulations ensuring ease of access for all. Suitable changing and toilet facilities are available in the building for people with disabilities.

The school has a Single Equality Scheme and Accessibility plan. The main site is two stories with fourteen classrooms, four of which are on the second floor. Access to upstairs classrooms is gained by stairs or by a lift. The ground floor has wheelchair access and if necessary classrooms are relocated according to the needs of pupils. There are suitable toilet facilities for children with disabilities. Adjustments are made to meet the needs of individual children when the need arises.

How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school or the next stage of education and life?

- In the summer term, the school organises transition visits to the Nursery class. During these visits, the children and parents are able to meet the teacher, EYPS and the Nursery Home School Link Worker. These visits are also used to find out more about the children's likes and dislikes, medical conditions and dietary requirements. The Nursery staff may also visit children prior to admission in their previous or current setting. During the settling in period, the teacher and Early Years' Practitioners observe and make notes about each child's personal social and emotional development, including their confidence, physical skills and their speech and language development. Teachers use this information to plan for the next learning steps. Children are assessed using Development Matters as a guide, observations, work and professional discussions
- Children joining the reception class are invited to play and stay sessions for ten afternoons during the summer term. This enables a smooth transition and children settle well. The SENDCO attends Annual Review meetings for children due to transfer to St. Mark's. Children joining mid-term may be supported by learning mentors or bilingual staff according to their needs.
- When children transfer to other settings, staff from St. Mark's liaise with the new school to share information and plan transition work and visits. This may include staff accompanying children and their parents on such visits. Staff from Secondary Schools are invited to review meetings from year five.

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

The school receives funding to respond to the needs of pupils with SEND from a number of sources: A proportion of the funds allocated per pupil to the school to provide for their education (the Age Weighted Pupil Unit); The Notional SEN budget: The Pupil Premium funding for pupils who meet certain criteria. In addition, for those pupils with the most complex needs, the school

may be allocated Additional Educational Needs funding. This funding is then used to provide the equipment and facilities to support pupils with special educational needs and disabilities through:

- In-class support from teaching assistants
- Small group support from teaching assistants e.g. speech and language programmes
English and mathematics support
- Bought in support from external agencies e.g. access arrangement assessment, speech and language support.
- Parent workshops
- Provision of specialist resources e.g. assessment software or any equipment needed
- CPD relating to SEND for staff

When particular resources are recommended by professionals, these will be purchased wherever reasonable.

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

Decisions about support will be agreed at pupil progress meetings according to children's needs and progress and also in consultation with parents. Some support may be recommended by outside agencies and this will be implemented wherever possible. For pupils with SEND but without an Education Health and Care plan, the decision regarding the support required will be taken at joint meetings with the SENDCO, class teacher parent and other relevant staff as appropriate. Children with Education, Health and Care Plans will be allocated the level of support recommended. This decision will be reached when the plan is being produced or through the annual review process.

How will our child and young person be involved in the decisions about their learning?

Pupils' views are sought and the curriculum planned to meet their needs and interests. Each class from years one to six elects two representatives to the school council. Pupil passports include information from the child. Children's views are sought during reviews.

How will we be involved in the decisions about the learning of our children and young people?

Parents/carers of children with identified special education needs are encouraged to contribute to pupil passports. They will be able to discuss the support their child is receiving via a review which will be held three times a year. Structured conversations are held and parents' views are sought through the Annual Review Process for pupils with Education, Health and Care plans. Parents are invited to meet with professionals from outside agencies.

How are parents involved in the school? How can I be involved?

Parental involvement is welcomed and valued.

St Mark's has an open door policy and parents are welcome to speak to staff at mutually agreed times either face to face or by telephone. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and the home school links worker are available at the beginning and end of the school day. Regular newsletters are sent home via Class Dojo to keep parents informed. Parent consultation meetings are held each term and there is an annual report on your child's achievement. Parents of children with SEND are specifically invited to discuss their child's progress every term, but they can also arrange meetings with the class teacher or SENDCO at any time.

Parents are invited to participate in a variety of events and initiatives throughout the academic year, designed to strengthen the partnership between school and home and support the success of our pupils.

- **Half-termly Tea and Talk Sessions:** These sessions provide a welcoming and supportive environment for parents to discuss SEND-related concerns, review their child's progress, and seek guidance from external agencies in attendance.
- **Termly Parent Forum Meetings:** These meetings offer a formal platform for parents to receive updates on the school's improvement progress, learn about upcoming priorities, and contribute constructive input to inform future planning and development.
- **Parent Workshops:** A diverse range of workshops is available to provide parents with practical strategies and insights on key topics. These sessions also include opportunities for parents to work collaboratively with their children, fostering a deeper understanding of how to effectively support their learning at home.

We strongly encourage all parents to engage in these opportunities to build meaningful connections with the school and contribute to the ongoing development and success of our school community

What do I do if I want to make a complaint?

Most complaints can be resolved informally or by making an appointment at the school office to see the class teacher, Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. Complaints will be dealt according to the school's complaints policy. A copy of this can be found on the school website or via the school office.

What other support is available to parents and how can I contact them?

SEND Information, advice and Support Services is a service which provides free, accurate, impartial, confidential, information, advice and support relating to special educational needs and disability (SEND) for parents/carers, children and young people 0-25 yrs.

SENDIASS

Westfield Family Hub,
Buccleuch Road,
Normacott,
Stoke-on-Trent
ST3 4RF.
Tel: 01782 234701
E-mail: iass@stoke.gov.uk

Business Hours

The SEND Information Advice and Support Service Duty Phone is available Monday- Friday from 10.00am to 12.30pm or from 10.00am to 1.30pm. An answerphone service is available outside of these hours.

E-mail: iass@stoke.gov.uk
Website: www.sendiass-stoke.co.uk

For further information about the Local Offer in Stoke on Trent please visit:
<https://localoffer.stoke.gov.uk>