



St Catherine's School & College

*Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs*

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) INFORMATION REPORT

January 2025

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Throughout this policy St Catherine's School and College are referred to as 'St Catherine's School'.

Dear parents and carers,

The aim of this information report is to explain how we implement our SEND policy. In other words, we want to show you how special educational needs support works in our school.

If you want to know more about our arrangements for SEND, read our SEND policy.

You can find it on our website: <https://www.stcatherines.org.uk/key-information-for-ofsted>

Note: If there are any terms we've used in this information report that you're unsure of, you can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the report.

1. What types of SEN does the school provide for?

St Catherine's is a non-maintained day and residential special school for students with specific/severe speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Ordinarily, each student will have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which states SLCN as their primary need. St Catherine's School is a national charity which is approved by the Department for Education for the education of students between the ages of 9 and 19 years. Some students also have associated conditions such as autistic spectrum conditions, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

2.1 Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had?

Staff in the school are specialist trained and experienced through continuous professional development within the school setting. This is done through Performance Management/ Appraisal and identifies school development needs and some personal development needs. This can be supported by in house training or from external professional training /consultancy. Training is highly valued and is offered extensively to all staff.

Some examples of training include:

- Autism Education Trust
- Total communication
- Sign supported English
- Social stories/Comic Strip conversations
- Safeguarding
- Manual handling training (CPI)
- Local Authority training courses and initiatives
- Courses relating to specific SEN issues
- LGBTQ+ training
- Trauma Informed Schools training
- Training from specific departments, including OT, Art, dance and movement Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy A number of staff

hold first aid qualifications to enable prompt response to known health issues and medical emergencies.

- Qualified minibus drivers to enable access to the community and trips for every class

2.2 Teaching assistants (TAs)

We have a team of 25 TAs, including 4 higher-level teaching assistants (HLTAs).

2.3 Therapy Support

We have an onsite therapy team consisting of:

- Speech and language therapists and assistants
- Occupational therapists and assistants
- Art Psychotherapist
- Dance and Movement Psychotherapist
- Senior Mental Health Lead and internal mental health team

2.4 Additional Support

We also have our own team of nursing staff and residential support workers.

2.5 External agencies and experts

Sometimes we need extra help to offer our pupils the support they need. Whenever necessary we will work with external support services to meet the needs of our pupils with SEN and to support their families. These include:

- Educational psychologists
- Physiotherapists
- GPs or paediatricians
- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Social services and other local authority (LA)-provided support services
- Voluntary sector organisations

All pupils with a sensory impairment i.e. visual or hearing on their EHC plan will be entitled to support from HI/VI advisors who will assess need and give advice and programmes to class teams. They will then monitor pupils regularly.

3. How will the school measure my child's progress?

The cycle of assess, plan, do, review, as recommended in the SEN Code of practice will be followed to plan the pupil's needs and track progress. We follow the 'Graduated Approach' to identify and meet your child's SEN needs.

The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.

Review

We will assess how well the support we put in place helped the child to meet the outcomes we set. We will use our improved understanding of your child's needs to improve the support we offer.

Do

We will put our plan into practice. The class teacher, with the support of the SENCO, will be responsible for working with your child on a daily basis, and making sure the support we put in place is having the impact we intended.



Assess

If your child is not making the expected level of progress, we will make an assessment to find out what strengths and difficulties your child has. We will ask for input from you and your child, as well as getting help from external professionals where necessary.

Plan

In discussion with you and your child, we will decide what outcomes we are hoping to achieve. We will make a plan of the support we will offer your child to help them meet those outcomes. We will make a record of this and share it with you and all relevant school staff.

We will track your child's progress towards the outcomes we set over time and improve our offer as we learn what your child responds to best.

Tracking systems used include:

- Using a modified curriculum based on the National Curriculum for KS1-4 that enables tracking of progress in all areas of learning (education, therapy and residential).
- For KS2 – KS4 annual target setting in all subjects based on teacher assessment and prior attainment. These are scrutinised termly through student progress monitoring meetings.

- For Post 16 annual targets set based on predicted grades in accreditation or completion of course. These are scrutinised termly through student progress monitoring meetings.
- Accreditation results (KS4 and Post 16)
- Liaison aims – termly to track small step aims towards yearly targets.
- Evidence of current levels through work scrutiny and moderation – termly
- Therapy assessments and progress towards achieving outcomes in individual programmes
- Life skills assessment in residential setting
- Attendance
- Behaviour through Behaviour for Learning Tracker, Positive Behaviour Management Plans and incident form

4. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?

We know that you're the expert when it comes to your child's needs and aspirations. So we want to make sure you have a full understanding of how we're trying to meet your child's needs, so that you can provide insight into what you think would work best for your child.

We also want to hear from you as much as possible so that we can build a better picture of how the support we are providing is impacting your child outside of school.

You will be informed of your child's progress and learning in a variety of ways:

- Weekly newsletters
- Phone calls/face to face meetings to share achievements/concerns
- School Reports (annually)
- Liaison aims (termly)
- Parent teacher meetings (termly)
- Annual Review meetings (annually)

Your child's class teacher will be available to meet you 3 times a year, to:

- Set clear outcomes for your child's progress
- Review progress towards those outcomes
- Discuss the support we will put in place to help your child make that progress
- Identify what we will do, what we will ask you to do, and what we will ask your child to do
- Discuss liaison aims set termly to track small step aims towards yearly targets.

After any discussion we will make a record of any outcomes, actions and support that have been agreed. This record will be shared with all relevant staff, and you will be given a copy.

If you have concerns that arise between these meetings, please contact your child's class teacher, initially either via email or by telephone.

5. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?

The level of involvement will depend on your child's age and level of competence. We recognise that no two children are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input.

We may seek your child's views by asking them to:

- Attend meetings to discuss their progress and outcomes
- Prepare a presentation, written statement, video, drawing, etc.
- Discuss their views with a member of staff who can act as a representative during the meeting
- Complete a pupil voice questionnaire in collaboration with the S< team

6. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child?

Whilst academic programmes are important, our core values are all about building Resilience; Courage; Respect and Ambition in our students, delivered via our highly personalised learning programmes.

The school follows a modified curriculum which enables us to focus on key areas for students linked to their Speech and Language difficulties. This can be found on the school website: <https://www.stcatherines.org.uk/key-information-for-ofsted>

Your child's teachers and therapists are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class or on their caseload.

The main methods of special provision in school are:

- Quality First Teaching in classes from specialist staff, with additional help and support by subject teachers through the appropriate type of adaptive teaching.
- Periods of withdrawal to work with a Learning Support Teacher and/or Speech and Language Therapist either on a 1:1 or small group basis.
- In-class support by the Learning Support Teacher

We offer a differentiated and personalised approach to learning. Students access the curriculum at a level appropriate to meet their needs. Students are grouped according to differing attributes according to the cohort, this could be by age, stage, social aspects or general ability, which results in classes ranging from six to ten students. We teach using a primary based model where appropriate, moving to a secondary based model as students' progress through the school. In addition, we offer comprehensive and fully integrated speech and language therapy and occupational therapy.

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs. We will make sure that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum in every year they are at our school.

We will differentiate (or adapt) how we teach to suit the way the pupil works best. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child.

These adaptations include:

- Differentiating our curriculum to make sure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1-to-1 work, adapting the teaching style or content of the lesson, etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, providing visuals, scaffolding tasks, tasks broken in to smaller steps, reading instructions aloud, etc.
- Adapting our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- Teaching assistants will support pupils on a 1-to-1 basis when required
- Teaching assistants will support pupils in small groups when required

7. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?

We will evaluate the effectiveness of provision for your child by:

- Daily observations/marking of work/annotation of work against lesson objectives and liaisons aims.
- Reviewing their progress towards their goals each term
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the Senior Leadership Team
- Holding an annual review

8. How will the school resources be secured for my child?

St Catherine's is a Non-Maintained Special School and is not maintained by the Isle of Wight Local Authority. Each student is funded by their own Local Authority and this funding covers the cost of all therapies received from within the school support teams.

It may be that your child's needs mean we need to secure:

- Extra equipment or facilities
- Application for admission arrangements for exams
- More teaching assistant hours
- Further training for our staff

- External specialist expertise

If that's the case, we will consult with your home Local Authority to secure the funding required.

9.1 How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for all pupils?

The Admission Process involves three stages.

Stage 1 – Review of documentation

Prior to visiting, we ask parents/carers (or their local authority, at parents/carers request) to submit their son/daughter's documentation for review by our assessment team.

Documentation should comprise of an Education, Health and Care Plan together with the most recent reports (Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and School Annual Review as appropriate), along with the St Catherine's Admissions Form. As part of this form, we ask, if parents/carers are separated, that permission be sought from both parties to proceed with the Admissions Process.

In some cases, a member of the assessment panel may ask to visit your child/young person in their current education setting. This gives us the opportunity to learn more about the student and whether we can meet their needs.

Stage 2– Informal visit

If the assessment team thinks that St Catherine's may be a suitable placement, then a family visit to St Catherine's, including the child/young person who is seeking the placement, will be arranged.

During the visit, we will discuss the child/young person's needs to come to a considered opinion as to whether St Catherine's might be an appropriate placement.

We consider whether:

- the child/young person falls within the school's approved range of special educational needs;
- staff feel that the school is able to meet the needs as described; and
- the child/young person is likely to benefit from attending St Catherine's.

If the responses are positive, then the application can proceed to the next stage.

St Catherine's does hold Open Days and parents/carers that attend the Open Day do not have to attend a separate informal visit.

Stage 3 – Student interview/assessment

The assessment/interview helps us all ascertain whether St Catherine's is right for each particular child/young person and his/her family.

As part of the interview the child/young person will join an appropriate class group and follow the usual timetable. Although no formal testing is carried out, observations will take place in all settings and informal assessments undertaken with Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and specialist teachers.

Residential interviews at St Catherine's School are three days. The interview for the Sixth Form College is four days in length. Students seeking a residential placement will be supported by our care staff outside of school hours. Local children/young people usually attend on a non-residential basis and may attend one or more assessment days, rather than a three-day interview, with other local children/young people.

For safeguarding purposes, it will be necessary to verify the identity of students on interview.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide a passport, or where one is not available, a photo signed by a recognised professional e.g. teacher, doctor, social worker. We also require that medical forms etc are completed before the interview. If these are not completed the interview cannot proceed.

Following the interview, we will inform parents/carers (and the local authority, as appropriate) of the outcome in writing.

9.2 Further Conditions of Admission

All places are offered subject to confirmation of appropriate funding and on a first term's trial basis.

If staff feel that St Catherine's is not able to adequately meet a student's needs as a result of the first term, then parents (and the local authority) will be informed as soon as possible.

All placements will be reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review process.

If you want to know more about our Accessibility Plan, you can find it on our website:

<https://www.stcatherines.org.uk/key-information-for-ofsted>

10. How will the school support my child's mental health, and emotional and social development?

We provide support for pupils to progress in their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils are encouraged to be part of the school council
- We provide an onsite mental health first aider team which is triaged by the Senior Mental Health Lead.
- We have the Zen Den for students should they need additional time or support.
- In house referrals for Art therapy, Dance and movement therapy
- A trained therapy dog within school

11.1 What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings, or in preparing for adulthood?

11.2 Between years

To help pupils be prepared for a new school year we:

- Ask both the current teacher and the next year's teacher to attend a final meeting of the year when the pupil is discussed
- Hold two move up days (or more if required)

11.3 Between schools

When your child is moving on from our school, we will ask you and your child what information you want us to share with the new setting.

11.4 Between phases

Students are given an interview in the Sixth Form College to support transition and students attend the move up days as previously mentioned.

11.5 Moving to adulthood

We provide all our pupils with appropriate advice on paths into work or further education. We work with the pupil to help them achieve their ambitions, which can include goals in higher education, employment, independent living and participation in society.

12. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEN?

Ms Jenn Walker is the key contact for all looked-after students. She will make sure that all teachers understand how a looked-after or previously looked-after pupil's circumstances and their SEN might interact, and what the implications are for teaching and learning.

In addition to supporting their SEN, looked-after or previously looked-after children will also have a personal education plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEN support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

13. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's support?

Complaints about provision in our school should be made to the Principal in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy. The complaints policy can be found here: <https://www.stcatherines.org.uk/key-information-for-ofsted>

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEND Code of Practice](#).

If you feel that our school has discriminated against your child because of their SEN, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disability-discrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal.

14.1 How will my child be supported in the residential setting?

SCHOOL

St Christopher's is the main residential house for our school-age students. It's located within our main lower school and is in a separate building from our main school site. It has 14 single study bedrooms, a kitchen, a TV lounge, recreational rooms and quiet areas.

COLLEGE

St Anne's and St Margaret's are residential houses for our college-age students, each of which have single student bedrooms, a kitchen and communal areas.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Each house has its own staff team led by a Residential Manager (or Head of House) and Team Leaders. Each young person also benefits from having a 'key worker' in the house who they know they can always turn to.

Together the team offers a multi-layered support system, which collectively provides a warm, supportive family environment for young people, including:

- Well planned and balanced social programmes
- Help to manage everyday routines
- Support to keep in touch with home
- Support for students towards independent travel
- Homework support
- Help with budgeting, pocket money and finances
- Support in developing life and social skills/ experiences

One member of the residential team sleeps in each residence overnight, which means that students will be greeted in the morning by people they saw before going to bed; the same familiar faces are also on hand, should they be needed overnight.

As well as being inspected by Ofsted on a yearly basis, our residential provision is monitored by National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) every half-term.

14.2 Life Skills

Of course, creating a warm and welcoming place to live is paramount, but our residential houses are so much more than that. Each day also provides endless opportunities to learn and develop their life and independence skills.

Our students' speech, language and communication needs often mean that they aren't always able to take skills they've learnt in the classroom into other environments. Our skilled residential team helps students to embed the skills they have learnt during the school day; in other words, transferring their EHCP outcomes into a real-life setting.

The team also helps students develop independent life skills; things like budgeting, shopping, travel and managing medical conditions.

Importantly, just as parents and carers would do at home, the team also helps students to develop their interests and hobbies by accessing a range of leisure activities.

Throughout, alongside their key worker, each young person works on their Individual Care Action Plan, at a pace that's right for them.

Our fantastic location on the Isle of Wight ensures our learners have amazing opportunities to participate in a huge range of activities – via community providers, or run on-site by the school.

When students aren't busy with clubs and activities, they join other students in their residential houses and use their own common rooms and living areas for social time, where they can relax, interact with friends, make snacks and take part in games.

This is a great opportunity for students to develop their speech, language and communication skills, as well as building friendships in a supportive environment.

The following provides just some of the activities our learners are involved with both in St Catherine's and in the local community:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art & craft • Beach Activities • Beach BBQs • Bowling • Cinema • Cooking • Cricket • Cycling • Dancing • Duke of Edinburgh Award • Fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football • Gardening • Golf • Gym and fitness • Hall games • Horse riding • Laser Quest • Life skills • Martial arts • Music • Rounders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scouts • Snooker / Pool • Swimming • Table tennis • Tennis • Trampolining • Travel training • Volunteering • Walking • Water activities • Quiz nights
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15. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEN, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at your local authority's local offer.

Our local special educational needs and disabilities information, advice and support (SENDIAS) services are:

Local SENDIAS organisations

National charities that offer information and support to families of children with SEN are:

- IPSEA
- SEND family support
- NSPCC
- Family Action
- Special Needs Jungle

16. Glossary

- **Access arrangements** – special arrangements to allow pupils with SEN to access assessments or exams
- **Annual review** – an annual meeting to review the provision in a pupil's EHC plan
- **Area of need** – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a pupil with SEN can have. The 4 areas are communication and interaction; cognition

and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs

- **CAMHS** – child and adolescent mental health services
- **Differentiation** – when teachers adapt how they teach in response to a pupil's needs
- **EHC needs assessment** – the needs assessment is the first step on the way to securing an EHC plan. The local authority will do an assessment to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan
- **EHC plan** – an education, health and care (EHC) plan is a legally-binding document that sets out a child's needs and the provision that will be put in place to meet their needs
- **First-tier tribunal / SEND tribunal** – a tribunal panel where you can appeal against the local authority's decisions about EHC needs assessments or plans and against discrimination by a school or local authority due to SEN
- **Graduated approach** – an approach to providing SEN support in which the school provides support in successive cycles of assessing the pupil's needs, planning the provision, implementing the plan, and reviewing the impact of the action on the pupil
- **Intervention** – a short-term, targeted approach to teaching a pupil with a specific outcome in mind
- **Local offer** – information provided by the local authority that explains what services and support are on offer for pupils with SEN in the local area
- **Outcome** – target for improvement for pupils with SEN. These targets don't necessarily have to be related to academic attainment
- **Reasonable adjustments** – changes that the school must make to remove or reduce any disadvantages caused by a child's disability
- **SENCO** – the special educational needs co-ordinator
- **SEN** – special educational needs
- **SEND** – special educational needs and disabilities
- **SEND Code of Practice** – the statutory guidance that schools must follow to support children with SEND
- **SEN information report** – a report that schools must publish on their website, that explains how the school supports pupils with SEN
- **SEN support** – special educational provision that meets the needs of pupils with SEN
- **Transition** – when a pupil moves between years, phases, schools or institutions or life stages