



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

1. What special education provision is available at our setting?

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a small mainstream school with approximately 169 pupils, 25% of whom are identified as having special educational needs (SEN). The school caters to children aged 3 to 11 years old, with a mixed Nursery and Reception class, single-year group classes for Years 1 to 3, and mixed-age classes for Years 4/5 and 5/6.

At St Mary's, staff and governors, in collaboration with Plymouth CAST and the Local Authority, are committed to working with parents and carers to create a nurturing and inclusive environment. Our aim is to foster high aspirations and provide the necessary support to help every pupil reach their full potential. Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) is an integral part of the school's overall development plan.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice (CoP), the Local Authority has a duty to publish arrangements for SEND support in schools. This is known as the *Local Offer*, which outlines the support available to children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND, covering education, health, and social care. For more information, please visit the Devon Local Offer website at [Devon Local Offer](#).

Identification and Support for SEND Pupils

Pupils requiring additional support, beyond what is provided for their peers, will be included on the SEND register. In consultation with parents, carers, and the pupil, the class teacher and SENDCo will identify the appropriate adjustments, interventions, and support, along with expected outcomes and a clear timeline for review. This plan is known as a *My Plan*, a planning document outlining differentiated steps and teaching strategies to help the child achieve 2-4 key targets within a set timeframe.

For children with additional needs within specific SEND categories—Cognition and Learning, Physical/Sensory, Communication and Interaction, and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health—Individual Support Plans are in place to ensure tailored support.

Additional Support for Complex Needs

Pupils with more significant or complex needs may be referred to external agencies, such as an Educational Psychologist or an Early Years Consultant, for further support. In consultation with parents and carers, we may apply for an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP), which may provide additional funding for support. The type of provision required varies depending on the individual needs of the pupil. For some, this may involve additional materials, while others may need extra adult support for part or all of their school day.

The SENDCo and class teacher will determine whether additional support should be delivered individually or in small groups, as well as the time and form of intervention required. These provisions will be timetabled with flexibility based on the pupil's progress. Support is tailored to meet the identified needs of the children and to promote an inclusive environment. The highest level of support is provided for children with the most significant needs. While most support is class-based, a designated safe space may be available for children who find the busy classroom environment challenging.

Training and Professional Development

The school is dedicated to ensuring that all staff have a strong understanding of Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Our approach is trauma-informed, and staff training, including that of our Mealtime Assistants, reflects this commitment. One staff member has undertaken the *TISP Diploma* (2024-2025), while another has completed the *NPQ in Behaviour and Culture*. Additionally, one member of staff has trained to become the school's Mental Health Champion. Some staff have also attended training around Attachment Based Mentoring, Emotional Based School Avoidance and TISP Lead Practitioner. Two members of staff have received solution focussed training from the SEMH Advisor and all staff have had a second, one-day TISP training.

At St Mary's, we strive to create an environment where every pupil, regardless of their individual needs, feels valued, supported, and empowered to achieve their full potential.

2. What type of special educational needs do pupils currently experience?

St Mary's Catholic Primary School is a small, inclusive school where we foster a strong sense of community, rooted in Catholic values. We are dedicated to creating a nurturing, caring, and hardworking environment, where each child is encouraged to develop confidence in their own abilities and feel valued as an individual. We believe that a school is defined by its people, not its buildings. As such, we strive to ensure that every member of our school community feels a personal connection and commitment to our shared environment, making it truly *ours*. In line with our Admissions Policy, we welcome children whose parents or carers wish them to join our school, subject to available spaces in the relevant year group. We are fully committed to inclusivity and offer places regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, or special educational needs, in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010.

At St Mary's, we recognise that our pupils present with a wide range of needs. These needs are categorised into four key areas: Cognition and Learning, Physical/Sensory, Communication and Interaction, and Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH). To support the diverse needs of our pupils, My Plans are developed to ensure that every child receives the necessary, tailored support.

With the resources and training available to us, we make every reasonable effort to ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. We work in close partnership with parents, carers, and a range of professionals to ensure that the individual needs of each child are effectively met, enabling them to reach their full potential.

3. How do we identify the particular special educational needs of a child or young person?

The school adheres to the guidance outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2014) and acknowledges that some pupils may require additional support to fully engage with their learning. We use the **Graduated Response** model outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2015): *Assess, Plan, Do, Review*.

- Concerns may be raised by staff, parents, or professionals working with the child.
- Initial assessments are carried out through observation, class-based evidence, and discussion.
- Where additional needs are identified, pupils are placed on the SEND register and an individual **My Plan** is created.
- Some pupils may require further assessment, leading to an **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**.

The identification of Special Educational Needs (SEN) is based on evidence gathered through various means, including:

- **Transition from Nursery to Reception:** On entry to the school, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Lead meets with the child's previous Nursery setting to discuss their development and review any referrals that may have been made. A transition report is also provided by the Nursery to support this process.
- **EYFS Observations:** In the EYFS, children's progress is monitored through observations aligned with the Developmental Checkpoints of the Development Matters Framework.
- **Speech and Language Screening:** Upon entry to Reception, all children are assessed using the school's in-house Speech and Language program, Speech and Language Link, to identify any potential speech and language needs.
- **Teacher Observations:** Classroom teachers continually assess children's progress, identifying any concerns when a child is not making expected progress. This may be observed through an adapted curriculum or in relation to the school's behaviour code.
- **Ongoing Assessment:** Formal assessments are conducted regularly, including assessments against National Curriculum level descriptors for core subjects. These assessments help monitor the child's attainment and progress in relation to expected academic levels.
- **Parent/Carer Engagement:** Meetings with parents/carers are held to discuss specific learning or developmental needs and to ensure that support is aligned with the child's needs at home and school.

- **Phonics Assessments:** Half-termly phonics assessments, using the Little Wandle Phonics Program, are conducted to track and monitor progress in phonics.
- **Termly Assessments:** Termly assessments in reading and mathematics provide further insight into a child's progress.
- **Pupil Progress Meetings:** Pupil progress meetings are held regularly between teaching staff and the Headteacher to review and discuss the progress of children, particularly those with SEND. The school uses the *Supporting Effective Teaching for Children with SEND* guidance from the Academy Trust to inform these discussions.
- **Further Assessment:** If deemed necessary, a more in-depth assessment of a child's specific needs may be carried out informally by the SENDCo, or through a formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist.
- **Transfer of School Records:** When a child transfers to the school, records from previous schools are reviewed to gain insight into any identified or ongoing needs.
- **External Agency Input:** The school also collaborates with external agencies to gather additional information and support for students with specific needs.

4. How do we consult with parents and/or children and young people about their needs?

The school recognises that parents/carers are the first educators of their children and we work in partnership with them to support the educational and personal development of each child. There is a phased transition for our youngest children when they start school. The school operates an open-door policy for parents/carers to speak to staff when they need to do so. Additionally, we support all parents/carers in discussing their child's progress and needs, at Pupil Progress meetings held each term and through written reports in the Summer Term.

In addition to the termly review and target setting meetings, pupils who are on an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) will also have an Annual Review meeting, to which all professionals involved in supporting the child are invited to attend. At this meeting, the external professionals, together with the parents/ carers, class teacher, SENDCo and any relevant support staff will review the child's progress made over the previous year and agree provision for the year ahead.

Children are also encouraged an active part in their own target setting and development. The school tries to encourage pupil participation in reviewing their progress and target setting.

5. What is our approach to teaching children and young people with special educational needs?

St. Mary's is dedicated to providing high-quality first teaching for all pupils and is committed to closing the attainment gap for children who are not meeting age-related expectations. This is achieved through adaptive teaching and universally accessible inclusive provisions. When special educational needs are identified through the outlined assessment procedures, pupils may require targeted interventions, either short-term or long-term, tailored to their individual learning needs. The SENDCo, in collaboration with external advisors when appropriate, supports teachers by offering a variety of strategies to effectively address the specific needs of each pupil.

In January 2025- we trialled the provision of Butterbrook- a dedicated space for our most vulnerable children. Children with Emotional Based School Avoidance, EHC's that could not cope in class and the common thread being an emotional/traumatic response to the mainstream classroom. This is monitored weekly by the SENCo with the SLT.

6. How can we adapt our curriculum for children and young people with special educational needs?

Staff at St Mary's work together to deliver a curriculum and provide a learning environment that is stimulating and takes account of the interests of the pupils where possible. Our provision includes access to the curriculum and independent learning through use of a range of resources including:

- Ordinarily Available Inclusive Provision
- adaptive teaching (scaffolding, pre/post teaching)
- workstations (teach tray system)
- specialist equipment as recommended by other professionals e.g. support chairs, wobble cushions, headphones, writing slopes, phonics mats, maths mats, sensory break out spaces, visual timetables, now/then boards, widget visual supports, sand timers, social stories
- small group support in class from a teacher or teaching assistant
- provision of individual/visual timetables and checklists
- information technology
- relational support plans
- individual targets
- speech and language therapist
- woodland social/wellbeing groups
- School Counsellor

In house alternative provision- Butterbrook – for our most vulnerable children, most who have been in consult for a specialist provision for a length of time.

7. How will we ensure we get the services, provision and equipment that children and young people need?

The SENDCo works with class teachers and support staff to monitor the progress of pupils with SEND at St Mary's. In the light of this, if additional advice is required the school may use the expertise provided by professionals such as:

- Early Years Consultant
- Nursery Plus Team
- Educational Psychologists
- Speech and Language therapists
- Family Support Workers
- Occupational Therapists
- School Nurse
- Outreach advisers from special schools
- SEMH Team workers
- Communication and Interaction Team
- Counsellors In some cases where a pupil's needs are very complex, through discussions with the parents/ carers and the Local Authority, it may be decided that the child would be best supported within a specialist educational setting.

All services, provision and equipment are monitored for impact to ensure they are benefiting the child and are cost effective.

8. How is this provision funded?

The school budget includes some money for supporting pupils with SEND. Children who have been identified as having more complex Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities may also be allocated additional funding from the Local Authority.

Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHCP) Plan. EHCPs have funding attached which is used to help fulfil the objectives identified within section F of each child's plan. This money is awarded by the Local Authority.

The Head Teacher decides on the budget for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in consultation with the school governors, on the basis of needs in the school. Consideration is given to:

- the children getting extra support already
- the children needing extra support
- the children who have been identified as not making as much progress as would be expected

The Headteacher will then decide what resources/training and support is needed.

All resources/training and support are reviewed regularly and changes made as needed.

9. What additional learning support is available for children and young people with special educational needs and how do they access it?

As already stated, ongoing conversations between school staff and parents/ carers means that if pupils need something additional to help support their learning, this will where possible be provided. Where additional support is needed, we offer programmes such as:

- 1:1 or small group support, within and outside of the classroom
- A variety of English and Maths interventions
- Specific Learning Difficulties interventions
- A programme of 'nurture' activities to support emotional and social development e.g. Time to Talk, Socially Speaking
- Mental Health Lead Practitioner
 - Speech and language programmes e.g. NELI, Infant Language Link, Junior Language Link
- Little Wandle SEND programme
 - Play therapy
 - Rainbows bereavement Programme

Further detailed information about possible strategies used, although not an exhaustive list, are included in the Academy Trust's Supporting Effective Teaching for Christmas with SEND.

10. How do we support and improve the emotional and social development of children and young people with special educational needs?

The school offers comprehensive Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE), Citizenship, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programs, designed to educate and prepare children for life both within and beyond the school environment.

Children's social and emotional well-being is supported through targeted individual and small group interventions, utilising a range of strategies to foster personal development. Each child has access to a trusted, emotionally available adult who provides support as needed. Some staff members are trained in the Thrive approach, which is

an integral part of our school's framework for emotional development. Additionally, certain children may benefit from bespoke one-to-one sessions or small group activities aimed at further enhancing their emotional growth. Following an initial assessment, which involves input from both school staff and parents, specific targets are established and communicated to all adults involved in supporting the child. The school operates an open-door policy for parents.

Support for children is also provided through nurture activities, which may be tailored to meet individual needs. For pupils with more complex needs, external specialists, such as the Educational Psychology Service, the Behaviour Support Team, or Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), may be consulted to ensure the best possible support is provided.

11. How do we support children and young people with special educational needs moving between phases of education and preparing for adulthood?

For children who have been identified with SEND prior to joining the school, the SENDCo will become involved meeting with the pre-school setting and with the parents/carers and other professionals where appropriate.

Although St Mary's is a small primary school, some children may still experience feelings of anxiety as they move classes. To help reduce this anxiety, all children experience transition sessions in the summer term, which gives them the opportunity to spend some time with their teacher and become familiar with their new classroom.

For pupils in years 5 and 6 and with additional needs, secondary transition is discussed at parent/carer consultations or Education Health Care Plan Annual Reviews. Parents/carers are advised to visit their preferred secondary schools and speak to the SENDCo if they wish. During the summer term of Year 6 staff from feeder secondary schools visit St Mary's to discuss the needs of pupils and extra transition arrangements, for example additional visits offered to vulnerable children. Support staff may accompany the pupils that they work with when visiting their new secondary schools for these transition visits.

12. What other support is available for children and young people with special educational needs and how can they access it?

Strategies to support Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH):

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School we believe that all behaviour is communication. Some children have powerful feelings and emotions that they struggle to explain or talk about. Often, they will act out their feelings until they are supported to talk about or share them in other ways. The school has used the most recent evidence-based research to develop its approach to managing behaviour and supporting children who struggle to behave in ways that are consistent with the expectations of the school. There is a relationship policy for all staff that supports the behaviour policy.

- Consistent school wide implementation of the school's behaviour and relationships policy
- SEND registration of those pupils whose SEMH needs and presenting behaviour difficulties are persistent and constitute a barrier to learning. Provision will include close collaboration with parents/carers.
- Use of sensory breaks, mindfulness and reflective, restorative conversations
- Children will have access to a trusted, emotionally available adult.
- Wide range of pastoral support in and beyond the classroom including Family Support Worker, Thrive, Play Therapy, time in the sensory room or a referral for additional professional support.
- Where a pupil's Social, Emotional or Mental Health continues to deteriorate because of inadequate response to the above provision a referral will be made to one or more of the following agencies: the EP, or CAMHS, SEMH Devon, School Counsellor.

Strategies/programmes to support Physical needs:

- Assessment by and intervention from an occupational therapist on referral.
- Implementation of recommendations by occupational therapist or physiotherapist by an allocated member of staff.

- Provision of support resources such as writing wedges and pencil grips.
- Activities and breaks to support the vestibular system and proprioception

Strategies/programmes to support speech and language:

- Assessment by and intervention from a speech and language therapist on referral.
- Additional support and interventions within class
- Implementation of Speech and Language programmes by TAs
- Specific staff have had S&L training to support: An overview of communication difficulties and initial management, developing listening and attention skills, expressive language skills and early literacy skills and Developing and Using Resources to Support Expressive and Receptive Language Skills in Mainstream Settings

Access to medical interventions:

- Regular meetings between SENDCo and school nurse
- Wide range of support staff and midday meals supervisors trained in First Aid
- Staff training in the administration of support and/ or medication for Anaphylaxis and Epipen use
- Liaison with medical professionals for children with ongoing treatment.
- Individual protocols for children with significant medical needs including photographs of child and detailing the child's condition and required medication displayed in the staffroom.

Support/supervision at unstructured times of the day including personal care:

- Trained midday meals supervisor in the lunch hall and playgrounds
- Midday meals supervisors initiating and supporting activities during lunchtime

Responsible People (Buddies) help in lunch hall and playground, supporting the younger pupils of the school.

13. What extra-curricular activities are available for children and young people with special educational needs?

There are a range of extra-curricular clubs at lunchtimes and after school. The after-school activities vary, depending on the age of your child and what activities are running during that term. All children receive letters inviting them to join clubs that are available to them - details of available clubs can be obtained from the school office.

14. How do we assess and review progress towards agreed outcomes, and how are parents, children and young people involved in this process?

Pupil progress meetings take place between the teaching staff and the Head teacher each half term. Targets are set and reviewed using the school's data tracking system. These targets and next steps are then discussed with the child where appropriate. For children with SEND, steps may be very small and so are best assessed and recorded using individualised assessment methods.

A few pupils have individual targets and plans for their SEMH needs, which are reviewed each term.

The following formal assessments also take place each year:

- EYFS Early Learning Goals and baseline assessment
- Phonics Screening (Year 1)
- Multiplication Check (Year 4)
- Key Stage One optional SATs (Year 2) in Reading, Writing and Maths.
- Key Stage Two SATs (Year 6) in Reading, Spelling and Grammar (SPAG) and Maths. teacher assessments in Writing
- Termly reading Tests (Year 1-Year 6)

- Termly maths assessments (Year 1-Year 6)

In addition to these formal assessments, teachers make informal assessments of pupil progress, as part of the daily assessment for learning.

15. How do we assess the effectiveness of our special needs provision and how are parents, children and young people involved in this assessment?

Parent and pupils are encouraged to take part in annual questionnaires or Parent View online. The results of these are published on the school website, under the Parents section. Comments received include:

What our parents say:

“The school is well run, safe and the children learn well”

“Keeping parents informed. Dedicated, enthusiastic teachers, small school, responsive to parents – great!”

“In comparison to a previous school, we have found St Mary’s to be very supportive, friendly and welcoming.”

“The teachers and head teacher respond quickly if there is ever an issue, and we feel respected and listened to.”

“Our daughter feels safe and valued. Thank you.”

Dismissal arrangements have changed, giving parents better access to build strong relationships with their child’s class teacher, and have daily informal check-ins. Home-school communications books can also be set up, if deemed appropriate.

Parents are also encouraged to comment on their child’s report at the end of each academic year.

16. How do we ensure that teaching staff and other staff have the expertise needed to support children and young people with special educational needs?

Staff have a wealth of experience and training covering a broad range of SEND. Training needs for staff are established when employment begins and discussed and reviewed at each annual review.

Currently, there are staff at St Mary’s who are trained to deliver:

- A range of curriculum interventions
- Little Wandle keep up/catch up and SEND Programme
- Rainbows Bereavement programme
- Speech and language sessions
- Mental Health Lead Practitioner
- Social Stories
- Experience of supporting pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Dyslexia training
- Communication and Interaction strategies
- Therapeutic play
- Attachment based mentoring
- Emotional Based School Avoidance
- Trauma Informed Schools Practitioner
- NPQ Behaviour and Culture
- Solution Focussed Mentoring – SEMH Advisor
- PIPs (Passive Intervention Programme) strategies

The SENDCo also shares good practice with other staff members and staff have completed online training in SEND, including the Devon LA SEND module.

There is a named SEND governor who visits the school to meet with the SENDCo and discusses the progress of pupils and provision for SEND within the school.

17. How do we keep parents informed where children and young people have special educational provision but do not have an Education Health and Care Plan?

Where there are concerns about a child who is not making enough progress, despite interventions and support, the class teacher will consult with the SENDCo and the parents/ carers to discuss ways to support the child. Parents are welcome to speak to the class teacher about the educational progress of their child at any time, in line with the school's open-door policy. There are also Pupil Progress meetings each term which all parents are encouraged to attend.

18. How can parents, children and young people make a complaint about our provision?

St Mary's 'open door' policy encourages parents/carers to share any concerns with the class teacher in the first instance. The SENDCo (who is also the Head teacher) can also be contacted for additional advice and support and appointments to see the SENDCo/ Head teacher can also be made through the school office. Details about procedures for making a formal complaint can be found on the school website or copies can be requested in the school office.

Parents/carers are also encouraged to seek advice from the Devon Parent Partnership:
<http://www.parentpartnershipdevon.org.uk/>

19. How can parents, children and young people get more information about the setting?

If your child has a diagnosed Special Educational Need and/ or Disability and you would like more information about what we offer at St Mary's Catholic Primary School, please visit the school website at www.st-marysrc.devon.sch.uk or contact the school office on 01364 642389 or via email admin@stmarysrc.devon.sch.uk, to arrange a visit.

Where can I find out more?

Further information is available on our school website and through the **Devon Local Offer**:

👉 <https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families/send-local-offer/>

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