

St Mary's School and 6th Form College Bexhill SEN Report

1. What types of Special Educational Needs do you cater for and how is support provided?

St Mary's Bexhill is a non-maintained, residential and day special school and college for pupils / students with SEN. Our pupils / students / students have speech, language and communication needs difficulties and either moderate or severe learning difficulties. A large number of our pupils / students are autistic and have associated speech, language and interaction difficulties, which impact on their learning. Some of our pupils / students have additional disabilities and others may have associated social, emotional or mental health needs. Often our pupils / students experience a number of different difficulties, which means that their needs are described as complex.

All pupils / students on roll at St Mary's Bexhill have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) describing their individual needs. The plan is used to ensure the pupil is provided with appropriate support to meet their needs. The plan and the provision described in it, is the responsibility of the Local Authority and it is reviewed annually to ensure it continues to both reflect the pupil's needs and support their progress at school. The pupil and his or her parents / carers should be fully involved in decisions about their education. Children who do not have EHCPs are not eligible for placement at St Mary's.

All pupils / students have an individualised communication passport, care plan, and if the pupil is residential, living skills goals. Additionally, some pupils / students also have therapy goals, sensory diet programmes, meal time information sheets and health care plans. These documents collectively describe the ways in which a pupil is supported to meet their needs and their targets for the term. Therapy goals are reviewed three times a year, and reported at the pupil's annual review. All documentation is created and reviewed in collaboration with the pupil, parents / carers and relevant external professionals.

Although individual plans are reviewed regularly throughout the school year, parents / carers can contact the school at any point to discuss the support their child receives. There are also at least two formal opportunities during the year to discuss progress and development with the class teacher and therapy staff. In addition to this, a third formal meeting happens where parents / carers can discuss their child's progress at their child's annual review. We understand that pupils / students needs can change for many different reasons and individual plans can be updated throughout the year, following review. Support and intervention is provided by a team of trained teachers, teaching assistants, therapists, therapy assistants and for residential pupils / students residential staff. The range and level of support needed by a pupil will vary according to their identified needs. Therefore, support is targeted for specific individuals or groups and reviewed using the monitoring systems of the school.

2. How do school staff support learning and how is the curriculum matched to individual needs?

Pupils / students at St Mary's have access to an engaging, challenging, broad and relevant curriculum which is based on the National Curriculum. Work is differentiated to meet each pupil's needs and learning is enriched through use of school resources, including the extensive facilities on site, use of IT and visits within the local area. Lessons are planned to include frequent opportunities to gain new knowledge and learn and practise core skills. Our therapists support pupils / students in class and individually or in small groups. Regular assessments ensure that lessons both build on what pupils / students know and can do and

to further develop their learning. The school and college are well resourced in IT and other specialist equipment to support access to learning.

Teachers are supported by a team of teaching assistants and they work in partnership with our team of therapists and therapy assistants and for residential pupils / students, our residential staff. In many cases we plan to deliver additional support in class, thereby reducing lost learning time by minimising the need for pupils / students to come out of a lesson to receive support. Where it is appropriate to withdraw a pupil, we aim to avoid core learning time for withdrawal. The form tutor/therapist will discuss the additional intervention with parents / carers at consultations, annual review, or when therapy goals are reviewed. Intervention may also be provided when there is a significant change in the pupils / students' circumstances, or if the pupil is not making sufficient progress in an identified area.

The progress, personal development and well-being of all pupils / students is regularly monitored. Pupils / students are set appropriate short term and long-term targets in all curriculum areas and therapy provision, if this is identified within their EHCP. Our school has effective systems in place to monitor progress of individuals and groups. As far as possible, pupil progress and attainment is compared with pupils / student the same age and starting point across the country to ensure we know if our pupils / students do at least as well as, if not better than, other pupils / students with similar characteristics.

The governors of the school are regularly kept up to date with the school's systems for monitoring progress and personal development and well-being and they are informed of current levels of pupil progress and attainment. They make visits to the schools to see these systems in action and to help monitor the priorities for the school.

The school curriculum and schemes of work are differentiated to meet the needs of pupils / students working from Pre Key Stage standards to National Curriculum expectations for Year 6 and beyond (Pre Key Stage standards are used where children are functioning below the level of the National Curriculum). Most pupils / students in our secondary and college provisions learn within this broad range, but if a pupil has particular strength or areas where they are functioning at Key stage 3 or 4 levels we will differentiate and adapt their programme according to their need.

There is a personalised approach to learning throughout the school and college which supports all pupils / students to learn and be included at their own level. When approaching Key Stage 4 and 5, personalised options for qualifications and accreditations are made available that suit the needs and interests of pupils / students who will be thinking about choices of college and / or future training or employment opportunities or next steps towards adulthood and life beyond school and college.

3. How will I know how my child/young person is doing and how I can support their learning myself?

Our staff work together with parents / carers to ensure all parties have a shared set of expectations and aspirations for their child.

In addition to the information provided earlier in this document, pupils / students progress and well-being is regularly tracked throughout the year at our multiagency progress meetings to ensure any necessary support is timely and effective.

Parents / carers receive regular information about their child's academic and personal development progress

via email, including strategies and approaches on how parents / carers can support learning at home. Parents / carers can arrange to speak to a teacher, or therapist and their residential keyworker if this is applicable.

Formal parent / carer consultations take place twice a year and a review of the EHCP occurs annually. These meetings give an opportunity for school staff and parents / carers to discuss the needs of their child and work together to ensure these needs are consistently met in all settings. The schools are committed to working in partnership with parents / carers to ensure pupils / students reach their potential.

At annual review meetings, parents / carers receive a summary of progress in all areas. Annual reviews are scheduled throughout the school year. Annual review reports include information about progress against targets set and information about what the pupil needs to do next to continue improving.

At the end of the year all parents / carers receive an annual report and which describes progress in all areas of learning and personal development.

Our staff provide support to parents / carers who want to support their child's learning and development. This can include regular signing classes to support language development and communication, the provision of advice and support and sometimes resources to use at home and the opportunity to talk regularly with the key members of staff involved in supporting their child's learning and development. A number of resources are provided through our school website.

Parents / carers are supported to help their child learn at home through the setting of homework and access to a range of online programmes used in school.

Regular newsletters provide parents / carers with information and photographs about school events and new initiatives.

4. What support can be provided for my child/young person to help with social communication, behaviour and health and wellbeing?

Small class groups and high staff / pupil ratio at both schools ensure all pupils / students are well known to the adults supporting them. Pupils / students are well supported to develop effective and positive relationships with their peers and the staff and our teachers and therapy staff, and Educational Psychologist are experienced and knowledgeable.

Break times and lunch breaks are structured to enable pupils / students to be supported in developing independent social and play skills and self-help skills. Lunchtimes also promote independence in eating and drinking as well as in social interaction. Staff on the residential facility also promote independence and personal development in a caring and supportive environment.

Pupils / students with medical needs are supported by trained staff. All staff receive training in working with pupils / students with a range of SEN. All staff are trained to meet the needs of pupils / students with speech, language and communication difficulties, autism and associated communication and learning difficulties.

There are high expectations that pupils / students will behave well towards each other and follow the school rules. A highly motivating reward system enables pupils / students to see that their hard work and good behaviour is recognised and appreciated, whatever their individual starting point. Support and consequences are in place for pupils / students who do not follow the rules and support for some is identified through an Emotional and Behaviour

Support Plan (EBSP). In addition to the whole school rewards and consequences systems, some pupils / students require individualised support and resources to manage their behaviours. The EBSP describes the specific triggers, approaches and strategies to support the pupil

All staff are trained to manage behaviour that challenges and any incidents of such behaviour are reported and monitored by the senior leadership staff.

The school and college are committed to ensuring a high level of pupil attendance. Attendance rewards are given twice a year. Attendance is monitored termly and low attendance is analysed and where appropriate, is supported, challenged and addressed. Support is provided to both parents / carers and pupils / students where appropriate. Holidays are not authorised during term time due to the impact this has on pupils / students learning.

A School Council meets every term and provides all pupils / students with a voice. Each residential house has termly meetings and an independent advocate, which visits termly. Pupils / students contribute towards their annual review and may attend in person where appropriate. PSHE lessons cover a range of topics and encourage pupils / students to discuss issues affecting them.

If a pupil is, absent for a period due to illness, and then depending on the circumstances, we will liaise with their family and plan to support their learning when they are able to.

5. Are school staff trained and do any specialist services /advisors help support with pupil' learning or development?

The staff working within the schools are themselves trained and / or experienced in supporting a wide range of SEND and especially so in the areas of speech, language and communication, autism and associated communication and interaction difficulties. Training is ongoing and ensures staff have the skills to meet the needs of all pupils / students. It includes training for improving teaching, effectiveness of learning support, autism and SEN, managing challenging behaviour, child protection etc. Below is a list, which is not exhaustive:

Most staff are trained in working with pupils / students with ASD.

Staff regularly renew training in behaviour management and there is a rolling programme for all staff in positive handling.

All class based and residential support staff are trained in first aid.

All new teachers engage in a teacher induction programme.

All staff have had training in Assessment for Learning, and support for learning.

Teaching Assistants receive training and support in effective support for learning.

Most staff who teach in Key Stage 4 have attended exam provider courses.

All staff have undertaken Prevent training.

All staff receive regular child protection training, this includes e-safety training.

All child facing staff are trained in the administering of emergency medication and many in the safe storage and administration of medication

All child facing staff are trained in food hygiene

Some staff have received PECS training as appropriate

All staff are trained in Signed Support English (SSE)

The school employs a School Nurse who is able to provide support, advice and guidance on all medical and health related matters.

6. Will my child/young person be able to participate in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

St Mary's is committed to offering a wide range of activities and visits to stimulate and enrich learning. Our vision is centred on the promotion of independence and participation in the wider community; we aim to prepare all pupils / students to be ready for life beyond school. All classes have regular opportunities to participate in learning outside the classroom and outside school. Parents / carers are asked to contribute towards the costs of some trips and activities, which are subsidised by the school wherever possible. Teachers plan visits and activities that are challenging and appropriate for the pupils / students in their class. Parents / carers are informed about forthcoming trips and activities and are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have about their child's participation. Residential visits are planned for older pupils / students and we are exploring how this offer could be extended across the school.

Residential pupils / students join local clubs and organisations and compete in various sporting activities locally, nationally and internationally

7. How accessible is the school and college?

The school site is large, but has been adapted to take account of accessibility requirements. Buildings are wheelchair accessible and where there are more than single storey buildings, lifts are available.

All areas of the school are well maintained, well lit and free from damage or clutter, making the environment comfortable to be in and predictable and safe for those with disability, SEN including ASD.

8. How do the schools manage transitions either to new classes, or to a new setting / school / college or the next stage of education and life?

We recognise that any transitions, including starting a new school, a new key stage, a new class or a new provision, can often be very challenging for our pupils / students and sometimes also for their families. By listening to you and your child together, we are able to provide the support needed to move to the next stage of their lives with the confidence that they are ready and equipped. We plan transitions carefully so that our pupils / students and students are as well-equipped and supported as possible for their next steps in education, training, employment, independence or onward placement. Transitions are planned on an individual basis to support each pupil and their family. Examples of our transition support include:

- Individual planned transition plans for pupils / students joining or leaving St Mary's School and College. •Our curriculum and support is designed to reflect the changes from primary school, to secondary school and then to college.

- Pupils / students transitioning within school and between school and college participate in both planned taster visits , which includes opportunities to get to know the staff who will be working with them, experience their new timetables and any rooms or areas within the school or college they are not yet familiar with and take part in focused transition activities.
- Transition meetings and career support helps parents / carers and pupils / students to plan their destinations post St Mary's. Many of our pupils / students go from St Mary's to further their education elsewhere and some move into residential environments with differing levels of support.

9. How does the school decide what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

Support and intervention including therapeutic input is delivered in line with the provision detailed within the pupil's EHCP.

Following entry into the school, a further baseline assessment is made and targets are identified including, where appropriate, residential goals. Parents/ carers are involved in this process by sharing information with the school about their child's needs and agreeing to attend all parent / carer evenings / AR meetings. Regular opportunities are planned for parents/carers and teachers and therapists to meet to discuss needs and progress.

Each pupil's needs are assessed and progress is monitored. This is done through regular reviews of the effectiveness of the support provided through teacher assessments of progress in all curriculum areas and relevant therapy assessments. Each pupil's progress is reviewed up to 3 times annually in our multi agency pupil progress meetings. Additional support will be identified and put in place when a need arises. Progress is tracked throughout the year and any lack of progress is reviewed. Additional support may be put in should this be necessary.

10. How can I get further information/ What is the admissions process?

Any parent / carer wishing to explore the possibility of a place at the school is welcome to arrange to visit by contacting the school and booking a meeting. Should a request for a placement be made, parents / carers will be invited to meet with the senior member of staff responsible for admissions to discuss the potential placement and the support the pupil may require. Parents / carers should also contact the SEN team at their Local authority.

Further information can be found on our comprehensive school website which includes key information, the school prospectus and key policies.

What to expect on a visit.

Parents / carers may decide to bring their child with them on an initial visit. They will be met by senior member of staff who will accompany parents/ carers during their visit. During the visit, parents/ carers will have the opportunity to talk to a variety of

staff and to see first- hand what the school can offer. Every visit will be different, depending on the individual circumstances.

What next?

After the visit, if it is appropriate, a member of the senior leadership team will discuss and arrange an assessment visit for the child. The arrangements for this type of visit will vary, depending on individual circumstances and taking account of information provided by both parents / carers and (where appropriate) the relevant Local Authority.

The Assessment Visit

The child will be placed in the most appropriate class and if required as part of the assessment, a residential setting. During the day the child will follow the timetable for their identified group and attend all lessons. Their presentation will help inform everyone in their decision making. The school will be making assessments and gathering information to inform their decision in relation to how appropriate a placement at St Mary's would be.

A decision based on the child's EHCP and any supporting reports as well as the assessment visit will be made by the senior leadership team as to whether they think that St Mary's can meet the needs of the child.

This decision is communicated to the parents/ carers and where appropriate, the relevant Local Authority.

If the parents/ carers wish to put forward the school as a placement, the Local Authority will need to make a decision as to whether they feel that the school is an appropriate placement. We are happy to offer information, advice and guidance to parents and carers throughout the process.