



Special Education Needs Information Report 2023/24

“Guided by God, St Gerard’s Catholic Primary and Nursery School is an inspiring and aspirational community where we learn to love, hope, dream and achieve.”

The governing bodies of maintained schools and maintained nursery schools and the proprietors of academy schools must publish information on their websites about the implementation of the governing body’s or the proprietor’s policy for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/ or Disabilities (SEND). The information published should be updated annually and any changes to the information occurring during the year should be updated as soon as possible.

This SEND Information Report has been compiled using the information required as set out in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014. Broad Areas of SEND The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities), effective September 2014, details four broad areas of need as follows:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
4. Sensory and/or physical needs

Reviewed by Miss L Roberts. September 2023

We are a smaller than average-sized primary and nursery school and we admit pupils from ages 3 to 11. Our school provides caring support for all children, including our vulnerable pupils and those who have disabilities or special educational needs. Our caring and competent staff ensure that all pupils are fully included in everything on offer. They work well with outside agencies to ensure that support is targeted appropriately for children and families who require it. Our Ofsted rating is 'Good', and our most recent inspection was in November 2021. The full inspection report can be downloaded from Ofsted's website, please visit the following link for further information.

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/111391>

1. The kinds of SEN for which provision is made

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we create and support appropriate provision for a range of special educational needs and disabilities. These needs are met at a school level (SEN Support) or through an Education Health and Care Plan as appropriate. Currently we are supporting children with a range of different needs, including: Speech and Language needs, Autism, ADHD, Attachment, Specific Learning Difficulties and children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. There are many other kinds of special educational needs and disabilities which we can cater for and we are always ready to access training and advice to support us in meeting these needs as appropriate.

2. Information about policies for the identification and assessment of pupils with SEN

We will know if a child needs extra help if:

- a parent, teacher, staff member, or child raises their concerns
- limited progress is being made
- attainment is well below age-related expectation
- there are changes in well-being, social and emotional health or progress
- information provided at the transition from previous settings

If St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School feels that a child has Special Educational Needs:

- a meeting will be arranged with parents/carers to discuss the concerns and the support being put in place
- the child's name will be added to the school SEND monitoring list
- appropriate support will be provided by the class teacher and this will be monitored by the SENCO

3. Information about provision for children with SEN (with or without an Education Health and Care Plan)

The admission arrangements for pupils with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs – all families follow the normal school admissions procedures.

(i) How the school evaluates provision

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we assess and review the progress of all children termly. Personalised Support Plans are reviewed termly by class teachers in consultation with parents and these are evaluated through identification of small steps of progress. As appropriate, our curriculum, learning environments, and activities are adapted to meet the needs of our pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (including those with social and emotional health needs).

(ii) Arrangements for assessing and reviewing progress

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, staff track and review progress towards meeting planned outcomes once a term, and the outcomes of the review feed directly into the next planning phase of the graduated approach. Whole-school monitoring and review processes are used to make the best use of time, for example, all children's progress is reviewed termly and this is discussed with parents at Parents' Evenings. All staff recognise that the process needs to be planned for as it is a crucial part of the graduated approach, providing a formal opportunity to evaluate the success of day-to-day teaching and targeted provision on pupils' progress and development. Class teachers drive the process, with support from the SENCO and/or Mental Health Lead, and consider questions such as:

- Has the child achieved the agreed targets?
- What is the evidence from day-to-day intervention tracking?
- Are the skills acquired through targeted support transferred back into class work?
- How have the pupil and parents responded to targeted provision?

- What are the views of support staff, parents and the pupil?
- How will the outcomes of this review feed back into the analysis of pupils' needs?
- What changes to support, provision and targets are needed?

(iii) Approach to teaching children with SEN

All pupils with SEND are taught a full range of subjects. All staff receive ongoing training and continued professional development. Teachers have experience in adapting lessons to make them accessible, yet appropriately challenging for all pupils. Pupils have access to all of the curriculum. Additional support in the form of a teaching assistant in classrooms enables access and further engagement in lessons. Priority is given to enabling pupil independence through differentiation and personalised approaches to teaching and learning as appropriate. The quality of every teacher's provision for pupils with SEND is assured through observation, learning walks, robust monitoring and review, and ensuring Quality First teaching is taking place, as a minimum.

(iv) How school adapts curriculum and learning environment

The Teacher Standards (2012) and SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 Years (2014) require all teachers to ensure all pupils in their class access learning and that they make adaptations to the curriculum, learning environment and opportunities in school to ensure this is achieved. Some of how we provide a highly inclusive curriculum and learning environment are:

- Ensuring staff have opportunities for relevant continued professional development relating to SEND
- Teachers planning with differentiated and personalised learning opportunities that allow access and success but ensure challenge
- Providing visual timetables, task cards, and various alternative ways of recording
- Responding to outside agency advice and providing specialised resources where required
- Responding to the views of children with SEND and their parents/carers through Parents' Evenings, All About Me sessions and One Page profiles.
- Focused teaching opportunities within a smaller group or one-to-one basis
- A nurturing approach is delivered by all staff.

(v) Additional support available

Outlined below are the different types of support that are offered to children with SEND:

a) High Quality Teaching

For your child, this means:

- the teacher has the highest possible expectations for your child and all pupils in their class
- all teaching is based on building upon what your child already knows, can do and can understand
- different ways of teaching are in place so that your child is fully involved in learning in class

b) Specific small group work (sometimes called Intervention Groups in school)

For your child, this means:

- your child's teacher will have carefully checked on your child's progress and will have decided that your child has a gap in their understanding/learning and needs some extra support to help them make the best possible progress
- programmes of support will be put in place on a short term basis to help your child to 'catch up'
- your child's class teacher may arrange for a Teaching Assistant to work with your child in a small group of on a 1:1 basis to address any misconceptions arising from daily Maths and English lessons. These sessions will happen as soon after the main session as possible,
- led by a teacher or most often a Teaching Assistant using the teacher's plan

This type of support is available for any child who has specific gaps in their understanding of a subject/area of learning. Examples of intervention groups currently on offer at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School are; phonics groups, Read, Write Inc. Programme, 1st Class at Number, Success at Arithmetic, Accelerated Reading, Project X, Fresh Start, spelling groups, Booster groups and support for children with Dyslexic type difficulties.

c) Highly personalised support through Personal Support Plans

For your child, this means:

- in consultation with you, your child will have been identified by the Class Teacher and/or SENCO as needing extra specialist support in school, in addition to high-quality teaching and intervention groups
- you will be asked to come to a meeting to discuss your child's progress and help plan the focused support for your child through writing a Personalised Support Plan (PSP)
- personalised support through specific strategies (which may be suggested by the SENCO or specialist professional) are in place to support your child to learn and make progress
- a Teaching Assistant, Teacher, or SENCO will run these small group sessions

- you may be asked to give your permission for the school to refer your child to a specialist professional such as a Speech and Language Therapist or Educational Psychologist, to help the school understand your child's particular needs in order to provide further focused support

- the specialist professional will work with your child to understand their needs and make recommendations, which may include:

- *making changes to the way your child is supported in class, for example, some individual support or changing some aspects of teaching to support them better*

- *support to set better individual targets for your child, which will include their specific expertise*

- *a group run by school staff under the guidance of the outside professional, for example, a social skills group*

- *a group or individual work with the outside professional*

This type of support is available for children with specific barriers to learning that cannot be overcome through high quality teaching and intervention groups. This is called Special Educational Needs Support.

d) Specified Individual support

This support is usually provided via an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan). This means your child will have been identified by the Class Teacher and SENCO as needing a more intensive level of specialist help that cannot be entirely met from the resources usually available to St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School through the delegated budget to provide SEND Support.

For your child this means:

- The school (or you) can ask the Local Authority for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment for your child.
- This is a legal process that sets out the amount of support that will be provided for your child.
- After the school has sent in the request to the Local Authority (with a lot of information about your child, including some from you), they will decide whether they think your child's needs (as described in the paperwork provided), seem complex enough to need a EHC assessment.
- If this is the case, they will meet with you and ask you and all professionals involved with your child to contribute to a report outlining your child's needs.
- After the reports have all been sent in, the Local Authority will decide if your child's needs require an EHC Plan to make good progress.
- If this is the case, they will write an EHC Plan.

- If this is not the case, they will ask the school to continue with Special Educational Needs Support and also set up a meeting in school to ensure a plan is in place to ensure your child makes as much progress as possible.
- The EHC Plan will outline long and short term objectives for your child and what support they will receive in order to achieve these outcomes.
- This type of support is available for children whose learning needs are complex and lifelong.

This graduated approach is evaluated using the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle, which begins with the Class Teacher. For each type of provision, appropriate professionals will also adopt the same approach to evaluating the successfulness and appropriateness for each child. In the 'review' stage of the graduated approach teachers gain a growing understanding of what approaches secure better outcomes. Teachers continually review all pupils' progress, formally and informally. It is not necessary for teachers to wait for formal review meetings before reviewing and, if appropriate, making changes to teaching approaches and other provision.

(vi) Enabling pupils to participate in activities

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we see it as a priority to commit ourselves to the highest levels of pupil participation for all children. We recognise that there must be a commitment to the long-term participation of pupils and that some pupils may need support and encouragement to help them become actively involved. Here at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we make best use of any available expertise. Pupils with SEND, their parents, specialist teachers, local voluntary and disability organisations can support us in bringing a useful perspective to help identify practices and arrangements that may act as a barrier to admitting, accommodating and including all our children within all activities.

(vii) Support for improving emotional, mental and social development of pupils with SEN

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we understand that an important feature of the school is to enable all pupils to develop emotional resilience and social skills, both through direct teaching (e.g. PSHE or Circle Time) and indirect teaching (every conversation adults have with children throughout the day). Pupils in the early stages of emotional and social development because of their special educational needs will be supported to enable them to develop and mature appropriately. This will usually require additional and different resources, beyond that required by pupils who do not need this support. The SENCO and Mental Health Lead (D. McCabe) may, under the consent of the parent, feel it is appropriate to coordinate additional support through access to a mentor, an external referral to CAHMS (Child and Adolescent

Mental Health Service), a referral to the Mental Health Support Team, or access to a therapeutic intervention. Some pupils may benefit from additional support through specific emotional and mental health strategies, such as the use of ELSA, social stories, time-out spaces and personalised reward charts.

4. Name and contact details of SENCO and Mental Health Lead

The **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)** at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is **Miss L Roberts**. Appointments can be made by contacting:

Telephone: 0151 424 7859

Email: lauraroberts@stgerardswidnes.co.uk

The Mental Health Lead at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School is Mr D McCabe. Appointments can be made by contacting:

Telephone: 0151 424 7859

Email: danielmccabe@stgerardswidnes.co.uk

5. Expertise including training of staff and seeking of specialist expertise

Part of the SENCO's role in school is to support class teachers and teaching assistants in teaching children with SEND.

The school has a training plan for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of children including those with SEND, this involves whole school training on SEND issues.

Individual teachers and teaching assistants have also attended specialist training courses run by outside agencies that are relevant to the needs of specific children in their classes e.g. Teaching children with Dyslexic type difficulties, understanding Sensory Processing Disorder, understanding, and teaching children with ADHD etc. The SENCO is studying toward the NASENCO Post Graduate Certificate, attends regular courses and is committed to professional development.

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School we work in partnership with a range of professionals to support children with SEND. Currently, directly funded by the school:

- Additional Educational Psychology Service input to provide a higher level of service to the school
- Additional Speech and Language Therapist support to provide a higher level of service to the school

In addition to the above the SENCO can make referrals to:

- Specialist Teachers for Autism
- Specialist Teachers for Cognition and Learning
- Specialist Teachers of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired
- SEND Outreach Team
- Social Care services / Early Help Team

The Mental Health Lead can make referrals to the Mental Health Support Team and The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The Mental Health Lead works alongside the SENCO, ensuring the SENCO is informed of any referrals made and support given.

6. Equipment and facilities secured for pupils with SEND

At St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School, we strongly believe in fulfilling our statutory requirement to be an inclusive school. We follow the National Curriculum and think very carefully about how we can adapt this and our learning environments appropriately for pupils with special educational needs. We also incorporate the advice provided as a result of assessments, (both internal and external) and the strategies described in Education, Health and Care Plans.

- We ensure that the equipment used is accessible to all children regardless of their needs
- Extra-curricular activities are accessible for children with SEND.
- Access arrangements are made by the SLT for children with SEND who take part in Standard Attainments Tests (SATs) in Year 6.
- Support is provided for children with SEND who require it at break times and other unstructured times.
- We provided daily access to Nurture Provision for children with SEMH needs.

Where external advisors recommend the use of equipment or facilities which the school does not have, we will purchase it using the notional SEND budget, or seek to find additional funding. For highly specialist communication equipment the school will seek the advice of relevant professionals.

7. Arrangements for consulting and involving parents

- All parents of pupils at St. Gerard's Catholic Primary and Nursery School are invited to discuss the progress of their children two times a year and receive a written report once per year.
- The class teacher is regularly available to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have and to share information about what is working well at home and school so similar strategies can be used.
- A home/school contact book may be used to support communication with you, when this has been agreed to be useful for you and your child.
- As part of our normal teaching arrangements, all pupils will access some additional teaching/support to help them catch-up if the progress monitoring indicates that this is necessary; this will not imply that the pupil has a special educational need.
- If following this provision, improvements in progress are not seen, we will contact parents to discuss the use of internal or external assessments which will help us to address these needs better. Parents will be actively supported to contribute to reviewing needs.
- Parents of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan will be invited to contribute to and attend an annual review, which, wherever possible will also include other agencies involved with the pupil.
- All information from outside professionals will be discussed with you with the person involved directly, or where this is not possible, in a report.
- The SENCO will share information with you about local support groups, courses for parents and holiday activities that are relevant to your child's needs.

8. Arrangements for consulting with our young people with SEN

When a pupil has been identified to have special educational needs because special educational provision is being made for him or her, the pupil will be consulted about and involved in the arrangements made for them as part of person-centred planning. We value the opinions of our children about their learning needs and use this information to best support their progress.

9. How complaints are dealt with

If a parent or carer has any concerns or complaints regarding the care or welfare of their child an appointment can be made by them to speak to the Head Teacher or SENCO, who will be able to provide advice on formal procedures for complaint. We encourage parents to discuss their concerns with the class teacher, SENCO, Senior Leadership Team or Head Teacher to resolve the issue before making a formal

complaint. Our complaints procedure, available from the school website, sets out the steps for making a complaint in more detail.

10. How outside bodies, LA, Health, Voluntary agencies are involved

We work closely and have strong partnerships with other agencies who are involved in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND and in supporting the families of such pupils. We may involve specialists at any point to advise us on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. We will always seek to involve a specialist where a pupil continues to make little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age despite support. Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists. Some of the agencies we work alongside and seek advice from include:

- Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- Specialist Autism Teachers
- Speech and Language Support Service
- Occupational Therapy
- Child & adolescent mental health service (CAMHS)
- School Nursing Team
- Social Care
- Children and Families First Team

Agencies are invited to school to discuss their support for our children on a termly basis during our Planning and Review Meeting for SEND Support. This enables school to discuss specific needs and consider how outside agency support can be allocated to meet these needs in a timely fashion.

11. Contact details of support services that may help parents

In Halton we have a wide range of services to help support our parents, carers or any other adults with responsibility for caring for a child. Some of the services are outlined below:

Cheshire Autism Practical Support (CHAPS) – offer support to children and families with Autism and/or Asperger Syndrome:

<http://www.cheshireautism.org.uk/>

HAFS is a family run charity who help the whole families affected by autism in Halton. HAFS provide a wealth of key support services to the whole family:

<https://hafs.org.uk/> 7

Halton SEND Partnership provides support on a range of SEND issues:

<http://haltonparentpartnership.co.uk/>

12. Arrangements for supporting children through transition

Transitions can be difficult for a child with SEND, and we take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible

Joining St. Gerard's Catholic Nursery and Primary School in Reception:

- The SENCO will visit pre-schools with the Foundation Stage Leader when appropriate
- Your child will be able to visit our school and stay for a taster session, if this is appropriate. If your child is joining us from another school:
- Children will have the opportunity to visit prior to starting
- We will contact the school SENDCo and ensure we know about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child
- For those pupils with a higher level of need, a multi-agency 'Action for Inclusion' meeting may be required.

If your child is moving to another school:

- Our SENCO will contact the school SENCO and ensure they know about any special arrangements or support that need to be made for your child
- We will make sure that all records about your child are passed on as soon as possible
- A transition book may be made to support your child, if this will be helpful

When moving classes in school:

- Information will be passed on to the new class teacher in advance, via a planning meeting, where targets will be shared
- All children take part in transition activities at the end of the academic year, with additional support provided as necessary
- A transition book may be made to support your child, if this will be helpful

In Year 6:

- The SENCO will discuss the specific needs of your child with the SENCO of the child's secondary school
- In some cases, you will be invited to an 'Action for Inclusion' meeting with the SENDCo from the new school
- Additional meetings, visits and preparations may be arranged for children who find transition more difficult

In addition, for children in Year 6 with an EHC plan we will:

- Hold the Annual Review in Year 5 at the end of the Autumn Term or beginning of the Spring Term to plan for your child's needs in secondary school.
- Hold a Transition meeting in Year 5 Summer Term to discuss your preferred secondary school choices.
- Hold the Annual Review in Year 6 at the end of the Spring Term or beginning of the Summer Term and invite the SENCO of the named secondary school to attend.

13. Information on where the local authority's local offer is published

The SEND Local Offer is a resource which is designed to support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families. It describes the services and provisions that are available both to families of children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who do not have a plan, but still experience some form of special educational need. The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education, health and social care, as well as those provided by the private, voluntary, and community sectors.

The Halton Local SEND Offer can be found on the Halton Council Website at:

<https://localoffer.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/>