



ST. MARY'S R.C. HIGH SCHOOL

**Special Educational Needs and
Disability (SEND)
Information Report
October 2024**

**Vivien Rouse
SENDCO**





Context & Background

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)

The meaning of the word Catholic is defined as “including a wide variety of things; all-embracing” and as a Catholic school we consider inclusivity, providing access for all pupils to the whole curriculum, of the utmost importance. We do not discriminate against any child with additional needs in our admissions process, and children who have an **Education Health and Care Plan** are automatically given priority. Bullying and discrimination of any sort are not tolerated at St Mary’s RC High School. Where teachers, pupils and parents become aware of any friendship issues which are attributable to another child’s difference or special educational need, then they should inform the SENDCO or a teacher at the earliest opportunity.

According to the **SEND Code of Practice 2014** a pupil is defined as having a special educational need or disability if they have “a significantly greater difficulty learning than the majority of others of the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools”.

Most SEND will represent a long-term difficulty in accessing the curriculum in one or more areas, and we encourage pupils to learn strategies and use the learning approaches which best support them towards being independent learners in the longer term.

At St Mary’s, we currently have 105 pupils who require provision for Special Educational Needs on our SEND register. This equates to just over 14% of all pupils. We also have a further 31 pupils (just over 4%) who access support via a statutory **Education Health and Care Plan (an EHCP)**. This latter figure has risen sharply in the last couple of years, in line with national trends.

At St Mary’s we also maintain a list of pupils who may have a diagnosis of a learning difficulty or previously have been on the SEN register. These pupils’ Special Educational Needs are generally well met in the classroom by Quality First Teaching, but information about their additional needs remains easily accessible to teaching and support staff.

The school has pupils with SEND in all four “*broad categories of need*”, as defined by the **SEND Code of Practice, 2014**. The primary category of need for St Mary’s pupils’ with SEND is shown in the following table:



Pupils with SEND at St Mary's

The four broad categories of SEND	Number of Students at St Mary's
1. Cognition and Learning needs (C&L) (e.g. moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties)	62
2. Communication and Interaction needs (C&I) (e.g. speech and language delay, autism)	22
3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) (e.g. social anxiety, PTSD, attachment disorder)	32
4. Physical and/or Sensory Needs (PD/S) (e.g. Type 1 diabetes, Cerebral Palsy, hearing impaired)	20

Supporting children with SEND and ensuring their progress is in line with other children is the responsibility of all teachers. Supporting this endeavour is the SEND department, comprising a large and skilled team.

SEND Department Roles and Responsibilities



SENCO – Mrs Vivien Rouse, BA (Hons) PGCE; NASENCO; EAA Assessor (Patoss)

VRouse@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk / 01432 850416

Role: To co-ordinate all aspects of SEN provision across the school. Mrs Rouse is your first point of contact should you have any concerns about your child's learning needs. She is also a qualified assessor for Exam Access Arrangements.



Student Interventions Manager – Mrs Lilly Rogers

LRogers@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk / 01432 850416

Role: To plan, organise, track and assess effectiveness of all interventions for pupils with SEND, including liaising with staff, students and parents. Administrator of Exam Access Arrangements.



Student Services Manager and DDSL – Mrs Jo Hayden

JHayden@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk / 01432 850416

Role: Mrs Hayden is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. Her role is to oversee the wellbeing and be a point of contact and support, especially for children in the looked after system (CLA). Mrs Hayden also arranges and runs the Summer School for children transitioning from Primary School and works closely with the SENCO regarding all these children.

Teaching Assistant Team Leader – Mrs Amanda Fortey



AFortey@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk

Role: To oversee the day-to-day management and timetabling of our large team of Teaching Assistants and HLTAs.



Administrator – Mrs Helen Sagers

HSagers@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk / 01432 850416

Role: To ensure that the wide variety of SEN communications and administration is kept up to date and completed in a timely fashion. She also delivers administrative support to the pastoral and safeguarding teams.



EAL Co-ordinator / Teaching Assistant – Mrs Ania Hicks

ahicks@st-maryshigh.hereford.sch.uk

Role: To oversee and provide support for pupils whose first language is not English.

A large team of Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Higher-Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs)

A growing team of teaching assistants, most in full-time positions, work in a variety of supporting roles across the school. These include classroom-based support, one-to-one / small group catch-up work and specialist provision for specific needs.

Identification of SEND

The first stage of effective SEND support lies with robust processes to identify pupils with SEND as soon as possible. At St Mary's we use a range of processes to ensure that pupils with SEN are identified early on so that they can access the necessary support to progress. The SEND register, on which all children with SEND are recorded, is a key reference for teachers to familiarise themselves with the individual needs within their teaching groups. SEND identification processes at St Mary's include:

- High quality communications, information exchange and liaison with pupils' previous settings (primary feeder schools)
- **Cognitive Ability Tests (CAT)** screening of all children on admission in Y7
- Screening and tracking of children's reading and comprehension ability (This underpins their ability to access so much of the curriculum)
- Regular teacher assessment and tracking of attainment against expected targets in all subjects.
- Teachers / TAs / Parents and Carers are actively encouraged to report any concerns about a pupil's learning.
- In-school screening for some specific learning difficulties.
- Assessment and support from Herefordshire specialist teachers for pupils who are Visually Impaired / Hearing Impaired
- Access to specialist assessment via **Herefordshire Educational Psychology Services (HEPS)**
- Access to **WEST (Wellbeing and Emotional Support Services)** in school.
- School Nurse assessments
- Assessment as appropriate by further external partners, including: **Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**, Paediatricians, GPs, behavioural optometrists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, social services/family support etc.



Support for Pupils with SEND

St Mary's RC High School strives to achieve participation for all and achievement for all by creating an inclusive environment and positive attitudes among our pupils. We value high quality teaching and learning, and each academic department within the school is formally monitored as part of a review process twice per year.

The majority of learners with SEN are catered for by subject teachers adapting the curriculum as set out in the **Teachers' Standards 2012**. Teachers and Teaching Assistants are also supplied with regular training and guidance on how to support students with particular difficulties.

Once the nature of a pupil's SEND has been identified there is a wide range of responses available at St Mary's to draw on in order to support pupils with SEND. It is paramount that pupils with SEND can access the same broad and balanced curriculum which is available to all our pupils. Measures to support this may include:

- Additional in-class support from a Teaching Assistant.
- One-to-one or small group catch-up / support with literacy or numeracy (usually led by a TA and may involve being taken out of some normal timetabled classes for a while).
- Changes made to the classroom environment (eg. seating a pupil near the front / close to the board / away from a particular distraction / providing writing slopes and so on.)
- Access to a wide range of IT-based literacy or numeracy support programmes which can be followed in school / at home / both.
- Access to our fully resourced **Student Support Unit** in the Caritas building.
- Use of a school SEND laptop to help with written work.
- Use of a reading pen (as appropriate).
- Access to a key adult for emotional support.
- Behaviour support plans.
- In-school mental health support practitioners / safeguarding support.
- Report cards (to monitor progress lesson-by-lesson in specific areas of difficulty).
- Time-out cards (to support independent emotional regulation).
- Support of a wide range of external agencies (including those named above).
- Specialist teachers, physiotherapists, occupational therapists make frequent scheduled visits to monitor and support pupils with relevant SEND.
- Wheelchair access and lifts are available to ensure pupils with physical disabilities are able to access facilities.
- There are accredited **Thrive** practitioners in the school.
- **The Wellbeing and Emotional Support Team (WEST)** supports many children with SEMH difficulties.
- Visits from the school nurse team take place on a regular schedule.
- Provision for access for emotional support to include multiple one-to-one sessions.
- Provision where appropriate for groups of pupils to share concerns in a supported space. (This may be used, and considered more effective, for example, for groups of pupils experiencing high levels of exam anxiety).



Evaluating support for pupils with SEND

The effectiveness of all interventions and support is monitored every term with progress checks. We also obtain feedback from TAs, teachers and parents which can help identify progress or continuing / emerging difficulty.

Pupils having literacy or numeracy support are assessed regularly to evaluate their gain (or otherwise) from the intervention. Progress may sometimes be measured against 'SMART' targets in IEPs, or it may be based on assessment built into the intervention.

St Mary's RC High School uses externally validated tests in literacy and numeracy to ensure that our teachers' assessments are accurate, and that pupils who need support receive it at the right time.

There is a comprehensive programme of parents' evenings and progress reporting which offer opportunities for parents to meet or communicate with teachers to discuss their child's progress and raise any concerns.

Pupils with **Education Health and Care Plans** have a statutory annual review to which parents are invited. However, parents of all pupils are encouraged to communicate with us at any time, particularly if they have concerns or issues regarding their child's SEND that need addressing.

Ultimately, the successful support of a pupil with SEND will have allowed the pupil to develop the strategies and confidence to manage their learning as independently as possible.



Transition planning: Joining Year 7

St Mary's recognises that pupils with SEND need additional support when transitioning between different educational settings.

The transition from primary feeder schools is a particular focus. Members of the SEND department (**SENCO and Student Services**) as well as the children's prospective Head of Y7 visit all primary schools during the summer term preceding the September intake. This allows for children to meet key staff from the school in their own surroundings. Equally, it allows us to observe children (especially those with SEND) managing in a familiar environment, and to judge the level of support that is likely to be required for each individual.

"Transition days" during the summer term are also a feature of the transition plan, where pupils from primary schools can visit and experience the new surroundings.

At the start of the summer holidays all pupils starting in Y7 in September are invited to participate in our **Summer School**. Y7 pupils can attend school for a few days when the rest of the pupils are not there. They can familiarise themselves with the environment, meet some of the other pupils who will be in their forms and meet some of the staff in a friendly and informal way. Many children, and especially those with SEND who may struggle with change and new routines benefit from this opportunity.

Finally, the start of the September begins gently for Y7 with at least 2 days spent in their form groups and little formal teaching. In this way St Mary's aims to ease the transition of all younger children coming into school – but the process is particularly beneficial to those who have SEND.

Transition planning: Leaving Y11

For pupils who have the highest level of need and are in possession of an **Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)** the transition to further education or training is highly structured. The Local Authority SEND Officer will attend a formal annual review held in the first term of Y11. In this review discussions will be held about what the pupil would like to do in their next setting, and what support will be required. All pupils at St Mary's participate in a wide-ranging and thorough programme of careers which includes visits to local colleges and the opportunity to hear about the various pathways available at post-16. They will also complete a period of work experience at the beginning of Y11. Thus, all pupils, including those with EHCPs, usually have a very clear idea about their preferences for their next steps. The Local Authority assists with planning and supports communications around the needs of the pupil with the proposed next setting.

Before transition takes place, St Mary's will arrange individual familiarisation visits to colleges for pupils with SEND if required. Most colleges liaise closely with us, and open days for prospective pupils are common. We have excellent relationships with the FE colleges that our pupils are likely to attend. Our SENCO liaises closely with the colleges' learning support teams to ensure that all relevant information is shared with them (subject to GDPR / pupil consent).

Occasionally transitions take place at other times during a pupil's school career. In all cases, we will always aim to ensure a smooth a transition by liaising closely with the receiving school or the school the pupil is leaving to come to us.

Also for inclusion in this document / on this webpage:

- *This information will be reviewed and updated annually.*
- St Mary's RC High School SEND POLICY can be accessed [here](#)
- Herefordshire's Local Offer for SEND can be accessed [here](#)

