



St Michaels' Academy SEND School Offer

Commonly Asked Questions and Answers

How does St Michael's Academy know if children need extra help?

St Michael's Academy is committed to the early identification of children with barriers to their learning and needs which are additional or different to their peers. When a child is not making adequate progress despite high quality first teaching we will investigate the reasons for this and identify the potential barriers to learning.

Children may be identified as having SEND through a variety of ways including the following:

- Pupils: Children may raise issues with their class teacher/Teaching Assistants or parent/carer regarding strategies they are finding to be successful with their learning. This information can then be used to ensure appropriate provision for their need
- Teachers may identify children by making observations of the child, analysing assessment data or by noticing a lack of progress in an area of the curriculum. This will inform decisions regarding provision and will form the basis of discussions with the SENCO
- Concerns raised by parents/carers. These concerns will be recorded and investigated and any outcomes will be reported back
- SENCO – who will work alongside both the parent/carer and the teacher to identify the child's needs and to support the teacher in collating information about the child's progress, attainment and behaviours. Where appropriate, specific diagnostic/assessment tools may be used by the SENCO to identify specific needs
- Staff liaison with Infant school/previous school
- Child performing below age expected national expectations
- Results from school screening assessments: Phonic assessments; Reading and Spelling Assessments
- Through termly Pupil Progress Meetings held between the Teachers / Senior staff /SENCO/Principal
- Liaison with external agencies. External agencies may be invited in to carry out more detailed and specialised assessments with the consent of the parent/carer
- Health diagnosis through paediatrician/doctor

What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Talk to us. Firstly contact your child's class teacher. If you require more information contact our SENCO, Mrs Ogden. We pride ourselves on building positive relationships with parents. We are open and honest with parents and hope that they are able to be the same with us.

What can I do if I think my child has severe and complex Special Educational Needs?

You and the school either independently or in partnership can request that the Local Authority carry out a Statutory Assessment of your child's needs.

After the request has been sent to the Local Authority, they will decide whether they think your child's needs (as described in the documentation provided), are complex enough to require Statutory Assessment. If this is the case, they will ask you and the professionals involved with your child to write a report outlining your child's needs and the provision in place following the graduated response. If they do not think your child needs this, they will ask the school to continue with the support in place. After the information has been collated, the Local Authority will decide if your child's needs are severe and complex. If so, they will call a meeting of all professionals involved with your child and an Education, Health and Care Plan will be written. If this is not the case, they will ask the school to continue with the support they are providing following the guidelines of the Code of Practice.

How will St Michael's Academy staff support my child?

- **High Quality First Teaching:** this is the teaching that your child receives each day within school. This is differentiated to meet the needs of all children
- **High Expectations :** all our staff have high expectations of all our pupils including those with SEN
- **SEN Support:** this can be one or more of a variety of methods and may be delivered within the classroom or in another area of the school or sometimes off site. The children have access to a wide variety of interventions that can be delivered either in a small group or individually. These interventions are delivered by a variety of professionals including class teachers; our SEN Teacher; our SENCO; Teaching Assistants
- **Referrals for Specialist Support:** Some pupils may require specialist support from an external agency. Any input by external agencies will require your consent

Who will oversee, plan and work with my child?

All teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND. The class teacher is responsible for planning, supporting and reviewing each child's progress across the curriculum. Our SENCO and SEN Team will closely monitor all provision and progress of any child requiring additional support across the school. The class teacher will oversee, plan and work with each child with SEND in their class to ensure that progress in every area is made. There may be a Teaching Assistant (TA) or our SEN Teacher working with your child either individually or as part of a group, if this is seen as necessary by the class teacher or SENCO. Appropriate Interventions, selected and monitored by the SENCO, may form part of an individual's provision plan. The regularity of all these sessions will be explained to parents/carers when the support starts. The SENCO oversees interventions and the progress of all children receiving additional SEND support. Each pupil with SEND has a Pupil Profile, which details

their individual strengths and areas of need and includes the strategies that support them.

Who will explain this to me?

The class teachers will communicate with parents through twice yearly Consultation Meetings to discuss your child's needs, support and progress. The SENCo is also available at these meetings and may offer a separate or joint meeting with the class teacher. For further information outside of these times, the Class teacher and SENCO are available to discuss your child's progress and the support in more detail (specific times available on request).

How are the Governors involved and what are their responsibilities?

The SENCO provides information to the Governors every term to inform them about the progress of children with SEND; this report does not refer to individual children and confidentiality is maintained at all times. One of the governors is responsible for SEN and meets regularly with the SENCO. She also reports to the governors to keep them informed. The governors agree priorities for spending within the SEN budget with the overall aim that all children receive the support they need in order to make progress.

How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

What are the school's approaches to differentiation and how will that help my child?

Class teachers differentiate the curriculum to meet the needs of all children within their class. All work within class is pitched at an appropriate level so that all children are able to access according to their specific individual needs. Typically this might mean that in a lesson there would be three different levels of work set for the class, however on occasions this can be individually differentiated. The benefit of this type of differentiation is that all children can access a lesson and learn at their level.

Class teachers implement the support strategies detailed in the child's Pupil Profile.

How will I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

In September, if your child is in receipt of SEN support they will have a Pupil Passport/Profile in place which details your child's strengths and areas of need, as well as recommended support strategies. A Provision Plan will also detail any interventions in place. They will have either individual or group targets set that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time scaled) with the expectation that the targets will be achieved by the time they are reviewed. The Individual Profiles and targets will be reviewed on a termly basis by the class teacher in partnership with the SENCO (when appropriate) and should include yourself and

your child. Progress will be reviewed against intervention/individual class targets and National curriculum levels for your child's age and stage and new targets set if appropriate.

If your child has complex SEND they may have a Statement or an EHC Plan (Education Health Care Plan) which means that a formal Annual Review will take place to discuss your child's progress and a report will be written. This can also be done at a six monthly interim review if there are changes to circumstances, or any concerns.

Your child's class teacher is responsible for reviewing your child's progress in all areas of the curriculum. The class teacher will assess your child's progress every half-term and will use this data to inform planning, selection for interventions or to identify barriers to learning. If your child is receiving an intervention they will be assessed before and after the intervention in order to monitor the impact. This may be done by the class teacher, the person carrying out the intervention or the SENCO.

If your child is receiving support from an external agency then they will monitor the impact of any work they carry out with the child through a Plan, Do and Review cycle.

What opportunities will there be for me to discuss my child's progress?

The class teacher will meet with parents/carers at least twice a year (Parent/Carer Consultation Evenings) to discuss your child's needs, support and progress. For further information the SENCo is available to discuss support in more detail. Written reports are sent to all parents/carers annually in the Summer Term and there is an opportunity for you to respond to this report.

We offer an open door policy where you are welcome any time to make an appointment to meet with either the class teacher or SENCo and discuss how your child is getting on. We believe that your child's education should be a partnership between parents and teachers, therefore we aim to keep communication channels open and communicate regularly, especially if your child has complex needs.

How will you help me to support my child's learning at home?

- Through the review meetings, staff can share with you some ideas to support your child's learning at home. This may be supported through a home/school book which gives details of your child's learning each week
- We can also provide workshops/booklets for parents, which focus on specific areas of the curriculum, including Numeracy, Literacy etc. or provide further information about Special Educational Needs
- Class teachers and the SENCo are happy to share practical ideas and resources with you at any time
- Homework is differentiated to meet your child's individual needs when needed

How does the school know how well my child is doing?

Pupil progress is informally reviewed by the class teachers and teaching assistants daily to inform planning and to identify strengths and difficulties.

We measure children's progress in learning against National expectations and age related expectations. The class teacher continually assesses each child and is responsible for noting areas where they are improving and where further support is needed. As a school, we track pupils' from their entry through to Year 6, using a variety of different methods including National Curriculum levels and reading and spelling assessments. Pupils who are not making expected progress are picked up through our termly Pupil Progress Meetings with the class teacher and senior staff. In this meeting a discussion takes place concerning why individual children might be experiencing difficulty and what further support can be given to aid their progress.

For children in receipt of SEN support we set individual targets and review progress. We can use these targets to monitor a pupil's academic progress or their social and emotional development, where appropriate, and update or adjust targets accordingly. This may involve smaller steps or using a different approach or intervention to ensure progress is made. All interventions are carefully selected and monitored by the SENCO to ensure they have an impact on learning and development of skills.

The SEN Governor monitors the progress of SEN children and reports are given to the governing body on a termly basis.

How will my child be able to contribute their views?

We value and celebrate each child being able to express their views on all aspects of school life. This is usually carried out through the School Council which has an open forum for any issues or viewpoints to be raised.

Children who have Pupil Profiles will actively be involved in their development and review.

All children will set and review their targets with their class teacher and or members of the SEN team and have the opportunity at the end of each academic year to reflect on their progress and achievements and areas to build upon, through their Annual report.

If your child has a Statement or EHC Plan or An Annual Review of their EHC Plan then their views will be obtained before any meetings.

What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

We are an inclusive school; we welcome and celebrate diversity. All our staff believe that children having high self-esteem is crucial to their well-being. We have a caring, understanding team looking after our children.

The class teacher has overall responsibility for the pastoral, medical and social care of every child in their class, therefore this would be the parents' first point of contact. If further support is required the class teacher can liaise with the SENCo for further advice. This may involve working alongside outside agencies such as Health and Social Services, the Behaviour Support Service, Educational Psychology Service.

All staff implement the school's Behaviour policy which sets clear guidelines for rewards and sanctions across the school. We also provide additional support for children who need to develop their social and emotional wellbeing through an extensive range of emotional literacy interventions including: Theraplay and Creative Art Therapy groups; Nurture groups; Forest School; Cooking and Gardening; Breakfast club; Social Communication groups.

In September will have three ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) Teaching Assistants in post, who will be working, under the direction of the SENCo, with vulnerable children during the school day.

How does the school manage the administration of medicines?

The school has a policy regarding the administration and managing of medicines on the school site. Parents should contact the School Office in the first instance and inform their child's class teacher if medication is recommended by health professionals to be taken during the school day. A medical plan may need to be written with the information you have given us to ensure that your child's needs are met. Most of our staff are first aid trained and they receive regular updated training on common medical needs. Parents need to contact the school's office to discuss this and if agreed complete a form: 'Parental Agreement for School to Administer Medicines'. This may include medicines for life threatening conditions or required for a long term illness such as asthma and diabetes. In such cases a 'Care Plan' may be put in place according to the directions of the medical team working with the child.

What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by St Michael's Academy?

Our SENCo is fully qualified with experience of managing SEND within schools and in offering outreach advisory support to other schools and agencies. In addition to holding the Post Graduate qualification that enables her to assess and teach children and adults with Specific Learning Difficulties, she is a qualified STC (Somerset Total Communication) Coordinator and has a range of training and experience in a wide variety of SEND.

Where a child continues to make little or no progress, despite well-founded support that is matched to the child's area of need, and/or we are unable to identify the barrier to their learning we will consider involving specialists, including those from outside agencies.

AS a school we work with any Outside Professionals that we feel are relevant to meeting the individual children's needs including: Educational Psychology services; Integrated Therapy Service; Children Social Care; Learning Support Services; Social, Emotional and Behavioural Support Service; Autism Outreach Team; Speech, Language and Communication Team; Sensory Physical Impairment and Medical Support Team (SPIMS); Special Educational Needs Information Technology Advisory Service (SENITAS); Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS); Paediatrician; School Nurse; Orthoptic Literacy Difficulty Clinic.

These services are usually accessed by the school via a referral process. The referral is carried out by the SENCO and will always be with the consent of the parent/carer. In some instances these services may be accessed directly by the parent via the child's GP.

What training have staff had or going to have in supporting children with SEN and disabilities?

As a staff we have regular training and updates of SEND conditions, Medication use and Resources /interventions available for our pupils in order to ensure all staff are able to manage pupils accordingly.

Most of our staff are STC trained.

All our TAs have received training in delivering the specific intervention programmes they deliver including : Read Write Inc Phonics; SLI; Theraplay; Learn to Move; Speech and Language (SALT) and Occupational Therapy (OT) programmes.

All our TAs have received training in delivering support for phonics; reading; Maths support and are competent at monitoring progress as directed by the class teacher.

We have staff who are ELKAN trained and who have ASD Level 1 and 2 training.

In September we will have three fully trained ELSA's (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) who receive regular support from the Educational Psychologist.

How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

All children are included in all parts of the school curriculum and we aim for all children to be included on school trips. We will provide the necessary support to ensure that this is successful where possible.

A risk assessment is carried out prior to any off site activity to ensure everyone's health & safety will not be compromised. In the unlikely event that it is considered unsafe for a child to take part in an activity, then alternative activities which will cover the same curriculum areas will be provided in school. Parents will be involved in the decision making about school trips and activities.

How accessible is the school environment?

St Michael's Academy has ramped access to the site and an accessible lift to the second floor of the building. Any other resources needed for access may be assessed by OT and Physiotherapy in order for us to ensure ease of access and safety for all.

The school is able to liaise with EMAS (Ethnic minority Achievement Service) who can at times assist us in supporting our families with English as an additional language. When necessary, the school uses the translation service to translate reports, documents and letters and to provide an Interpreter to attend meetings and Parent Consultation Evenings.

How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

- We hold meetings with the Feeder schools for children with identified SEND prior to transfer to St Michael's Academy to ensure a smooth transition. Information about other professionals working with your children will be shared at the meeting and appropriate plans made for their support to continue at school. Additional visits to school are encouraged and transition activities, including Theraplay groups, and also resources including photo books etc may be used.
- When moving class the current and new class teachers will meet to discuss the children coming into the class. This will include sharing Pupil Profiles, successful strategies, barriers to learning and next steps
- When moving schools the SENCO will contact the new school's SENCO to share SEN information prior to the move. Once the child has moved your child's SEN file will be sent to the school.
- When moving to secondary school, meetings will be held during the Spring and/or Summer Term to discuss all children with SEND. All children attend a transition day at some point during the Summer Term. For identified children additional visits to the secondary school may be organised by the SENCo. For children with SEND we would encourage further visits to assist with the acclimatisation of the new surroundings.
- We liaise closely with staff when receiving and transferring children to different schools ensuring all relevant paperwork is passed on and all needs are discussed and understood.
- If your child has complex needs then an Education Health Care Plan Annual Review may be used as a transition meeting during which we will invite staff from both schools to attend.

How are resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

- We have a team of highly trained TAs who are funded through our SEN budget to provide targeted interventions to meet children's needs.
- The school may be able to apply for 'high needs' funding for children with more complex needs. This funding is then used to ensure a higher level of support and resources for your child.
- The effectiveness of the provision is monitored by the SENCO and by the Governors via the Principal's termly reports.

How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child will receive?

- The decision regarding the support for your child is based on an **Assess, Plan, Do, Review** cycle which will involve relevant school staff, parents/carers, your child and any outside professionals as necessary.
- If there are concerns regarding your child's progress at the review stage, we will work in collaboration to ensure that more specialist assessment and/or provision is provided for your child.
- Should your child make good progress through the interventions and support provided, then decisions may be made to remove SEN support. Support would then be provided by the class teacher through a normally differentiated curriculum.

What support is there for improving behaviour, attendance and avoiding exclusion?

As a school we have a very positive approach to all types of behaviour with a clear reward and sanctions system (Behaviour Policy) that is followed by all staff and pupils. If a child requires further support due to being at risk of exclusion, then a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) is written alongside the child and Parents/Carers to identify the specific issues, put relevant support in place and set targets.

After any behaviour incident we expect the child to reflect on their behaviour with an adult. This helps to identify why the incident happened and what the child needs to do differently next time to change and improve their behaviour.

Attendance of every child is monitored on a daily basis by our Office staff. Lateness and absence are recorded and regular attendance is actively encouraged throughout the school and rewarded on a termly basis, as is improvement in attendance.

Concerns with attendance are rigorously followed up and meetings are held with the family and relevant agencies.

Who can I contact for further information?

- The first point of contact would be your child's class teacher to ask further questions or share your concerns.
- You could also contact our SENCO, Mrs Tanya Ogden, through the school office
- Additional information can be found in our SEN policy on our website
- Contact parent partnership www.somersetparentpartnership.org.uk

Who should I contact if I am considering whether my child should join St Michael's Academy ?

- Contact the school office to make an appointment to arrange a meeting with the Principal, Ms Judith Barrett, or SENCo, Mrs Tanya Ogden on 01935 423863