



Introduction

At St Mary's Catholic School, we believe that each student should be given equality of opportunity to achieve their full spiritual, academic, holistic and social potential by recognising the uniqueness of each individual and providing a rich and varied learning experience for all. Every student, regardless of their ability, is entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant to their needs. The curriculum offered aims to give all students a sense of achievement and thereby help them develop confidence, self-esteem and essential life skills. All students are encouraged to participate in the social and academic life of the school. We aim to provide educational experiences that take into account the individual needs of all the students and are appropriate to their level of ability. We believe that this approach enables all students to reach their full potential here at St Mary's.

This overview document aims to provide a summary of our Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) provision here at St Mary's. Our SEND provision is underpinned by our *Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy* and *Accessibility Plan*, both of which can be found on our school's website, under the SEND tab. The above are reviewed annually and underpin our vital work in this essential area of school life and are fully in line with current legislation regarding SEND. The provision that we offer ensures that curriculum planning, teaching, learning and assessment for all students, including those with SEND, takes into account the type and extent of the difficulty that may be experienced by students.

SEND Overview

At St Mary's Catholic School, we believe that high quality relationships within our community are at the heart of our ethos. At St Mary's we:

- Strive to value and nurture each child as a unique individual, blessed with God-given gifts and talents.
- Offer students wonderful opportunities for spiritual growth and development.
- Support our students towards excellent academic achievement.
- Encourage our students to use and develop their gifts and talents to the full.
- Aim to develop well rounded, polite, socially conscious young people equipped for the modern world.

St Mary's is committed to providing an education that enables all students to make progress, and we embrace the fact that each child is an individual and therefore receives provision and support to reflect their individual needs. The school offer a bespoke, individual approach to supporting students with SEND. Students are supported fully by the school's outstanding teaching and support staff who go above and beyond to ensure that all students, regardless of their ability, are given the opportunity to thrive and develop.

At St Mary's we are very proud of the achievement of each one of our students. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are no exception and they too make excellent progress academically and socially. Data for the last three academic years shows that students at St Mary's with an EHCP and those receiving SEND support consistently make progress that is better than the national average. These statistics reflect the exceptional support, and teaching and learning that students with SEND receive whilst demonstrating our commitment to every child. The high expectations we have for all students was also noted in our most recent OFSTED inspection in September 2023, which found that students, 'including those with special educational needs and disabilities have extremely deep knowledge upon which to build their future learning'.

By working in partnership with students, parents, carers, staff, external specialists and the Local Authority, the SEND Department aims to raise the achievement of our students and ensure they all have the same opportunities as every other child. For some children, this may be a temporary difficulty, while others may need additional support throughout their time at St. Mary's.

Our Assistant Headteacher SEND, Ms Mullan, leads the SEND department here at St Mary's and is supported by Miss Jones who works in a SEND support capacity. The department includes fifteen Learning Support Assistants who have a wide range of training, skills, experience and expertise. All members of the team have experience and training in

supporting students with a variety of additional needs, including ADHD, Autism, Attachment Disorder, SEMH needs and physical needs. The SEND department has its own specialist base, the Inclusion Suite, which offers excellent facilities for our students to use before, during and after school. The Inclusion Suite is a safe space where students learn new skills, explore their interests and develop themselves fully via a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities and specialist intervention sessions. This all takes place alongside the broad and balanced curriculum that students explore during lesson time. At St Mary's, we passionately believe in the inclusion of all students regardless of faith, gender, race, sexuality and ability, therefore all students are encouraged to socialise with one another however, we acknowledge, that for some students this may take some time and support, therefore the Inclusion Suite can function as a location to socialise and make new friends. The Inclusion Suite includes larger and smaller workspaces, a communal area for group work and socialising, a quiet sensory area, high quality IT equipment, specialist equipment for students with varying needs as well as office space where the Assistant Headteacher SEND is based.

The information below outlines the current number of students with SEND in attendance at St Mary's during the academic year 2025/26:

Year	Students	SEN Support		EHCP	
7	232	29	13%	17	7%
8	241	30	12%	18	7%
9	233	43	18%	11	5%
10	229	35	15%	3	1%
11	225	31	14%	8	4%
12	151	12	8%	2	1%
13	147	9	6%	0	0%
School Total	1458	189	13%	59	4%

Identification of children and young people with SEND

In the first instance we enjoy excellent relationships with our feeder primary schools and liaise closely with them at the point of transition to ensure that all information about a child's SEND is passed on to us to ensure that support is in place as soon as students join us in year 7. Where students are joining us from a non-feeder school we make contact with the SENCO from their school and request all relevant information so we can continue to support students as appropriate. Naturally, students could present with additional needs at any point in their school journey, so the Assistant Headteacher SEND, along with the SEND department, works closely with teachers in order to support identification of SEND. If, via our internal processes of assessing progress, teachers have any concerns about a student in their class, which they believe relate to a potential special educational need or disability that has not yet been identified they complete a SEND cause for concern referral form and submit this to Ms Mullan, (AHT SEND). Following this there will be communication with the student, their parents, other teachers and observations will be undertaken to identify what additional support may be required. The SEND department will work with teachers to document an 'assess, plan, do, review (APDR) cycle', which will inform the next steps to be taken. Throughout this process, the progress of the pupil and adaptations in lessons to remove barriers to learning remain a priority of the class teacher alongside relevant support offered by the SEND department. Where the APDR cycle indicates that support is required that is additional to or different from that which is usually available, then we liaise closely with parents and with their consent will add their child to the SEN register to receive SEN support. If necessary the support of relevant external agencies (for example CYPS, CAMHS, SENDOS, the EPS) will be sought to ensure that any interventions or additional support are delivered quickly. We communicate with parents throughout this process. There may be instances when a parent has concerns about their child and they are invited to contact their child's Form Tutor, Head of Year or the Assistant Headteacher SEND in order to investigate their concerns and carry out an APDR cycle to identify need.

SEND Provision

Outlined below are methods of support available for children and young people with SEND here at St Mary's.

For all students with SEND who attend St Mary's we:

- Ensure that any SEN needs are identified, assessed, planned for, and regularly reviewed to improve outcomes. We also monitor our students' academic progress following achievement points. We use baseline information to inform the effectiveness of our provision and intervention so we can regularly monitor and evaluate this.
- Recognise the family as an expert on their child and work in close partnership with them. We regularly communicate important information about our SEND provision to parents in writing at relevant points in the academic year. We also invite parents to provide information that will inform their child's pupil passport each year via a SEND survey that we send out. Additionally, we give parents the opportunity, once a term, to meet with a member of the SEND department to discuss their child's progress. (Parents of a child or young person with an EHCP are also invited to the annual review each year) At St Mary's we welcome all communication from parents and respond as appropriate to any questions or queries they have and make regular contact where any additional concerns arise.
- Fully involve the child or young person with SEND in their education and invite them to contribute to the support they receive. All students with SEND have a key worker who meets with them to listen to their views and ensure that they are shared on their pupil passport. Key workers also support students to set and review targets each term. These targets seek to help students make progress in any areas they wish to develop. Key workers also support students to participate in and access the range of whole school extra-curricular activities where additional support is required within the session
- Regularly request, receive and evaluate student voice and parental voice from SEND students and parents respectively. This has led to school forging and maintaining strong relationships with the parents/carers of SEND students.
- Deliver high quality teaching and ensure appropriate scaffolding of the curriculum and adaptation of resources to promote excellent student progress.
- Make available a dedicated SEND department, led by our Assistant Headteacher SEND, which comprises an experienced team of Learning Support Assistants with enhanced LSAs and senior LSAs, who are trained in various areas of SEND including Autism, ADHD, SpLD and HI. LSAs are continually developing their knowledge and training via a comprehensive programme of CPD. LSAs provide academic support, guidance and assistance to students with SEND and teaching staff (see further detail below regarding the role of the members of staff in the SEND department in liaising with teachers, parents/carers, students and external agencies). Where assessment and tracking of progress identifies that additional specialist expertise is required the SEND team collaborates with services offered by the Local Authority to make referrals and access this support.
- Provide support staff for students with SEND throughout the school to promote excellent progress and independent learning.
- Routinely evaluate teaching resources to ensure they are accessible for all students.
- Monitor access to teaching and learning for students through the school's self-evaluation process.
- Seek advice and guidance from outside agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service, SENDOS and CPYS to ensure any barriers to learning are successfully recognised and responded to in a timely manner.
- Use needs based 'Pupil Passports' and child friendly targets to monitor, evaluate and support student progress, involving students, parents and staff to compose, implement and review them. This information helps us to make informed decisions regarding future planning and provision.
- Provide Exam Access Arrangements for students with SEND.
- Offer Primary to Secondary and Post-16 transition support for students via close liaison with other providers, ensuring a continuation of provision for students within these stages. As our students prepare for adulthood we offer them opportunities to engage with careers information and information on potential post 16 options to ensure they choose the best pathway to help them fulfil their potential.
- Ensure outstanding support for families; with relevant services signposted, which may offer appropriate support or advice via the Local Offer (see 'SEND' section of school website for link to Newcastle and North Tyneside's SEND 'Local Offer'). This Local Offer provides our school and families with the services and avenues that can be explored in the event that school, parents, students and external agencies believe that an alternative provider or specialist provider could assist in meeting a child's SEND needs effectively. Due to the function of St Mary's as a mainstream provider, we do have strong links with local alternative providers. Currently, a very small number of SEND students do access Alternative Providers. (We have previously worked

with Newcastle Bridges School, North Tyneside’s Moorbridge School and Targeted Provision.) In these cases, excellent weekly communication is maintained between St Mary’s, the Alternative Provider, the student, their family and the Local Authority.

- Regularly update and review SEND provision with school Governors, including regular meetings between the Assistant Headteacher SEND, the Deputy Headteachers who oversee the curriculum and pastoral work of the school as well as the school’s designated SEND governor.
- The above provision is in place for children and young people who are looked after by the Local Authority and have SEND. For these students there will be extremely close liaison between the pastoral team and the SEND department as well as any relevant external agencies to ensure a holistic approach is taken to the support and provision they receive which takes into account all relevant factors for these children and young people.

For students at St Mary’s with the following areas of need, specific provision is offered:

Type of SEND provision:	Examples of support/provision:
<p>Communication and Interaction Needs (e.g., Autism; Speech, Language and Communication Needs)</p>	<p>Amongst other things, students who have communication and particular interaction needs may be on the Autism Spectrum and could encounter challenge around speech. Here at St Mary’s we support students with communication and interaction needs in some of the ways outlined below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Departments will ensure scaffolding of their curriculum to ensure that their curriculum intent, implementation and impact supports all learners and takes into account specific needs. This, in turn, ensures that teaching techniques and learning resources are appropriately supportive and challenging to different learners. ▪ Small, targeted group sessions to focus upon specific ASD and SLC needs. ▪ Continued development of IT, such as Microsoft Teams, to help remove barriers where possible. ▪ The use of the Inclusion Suite as a safe and peaceful area if it is agreed that this would be an appropriate strategy to implement. ▪ Support and supervision before and after school, as well as during social time, within the Inclusion Suite. ▪ Mentoring and support provided through our ‘Fresh Start’ and ‘IDL’ reading programmes, Sixth Form ‘reading mentors’ and pastoral mentoring support. ▪ Targeted intervention within Maths and English through academic intervention sessions, for instance, during registration and after school. ▪ Support from Inclusion Staff around social skills and organisational support. ▪ Extracurricular clubs and activities that promote social interaction and teamwork. ▪ Excellent pastoral support via dedicated Pastoral Team, Attendance Officer and school counsellor. ▪ Visual timetables can be provided. ▪ Support and advice from specialist, external agencies to ensure any barriers to success are fully identified and responded to; any programmes implemented are fully supported and communicated to staff. ▪ Inclusion Staff communicate with teachers of students with SEND once per term to ensure that targets are monitored, reviewed, evaluated and amended where necessary.
<p>Cognitive and Learning Needs (e.g., Moderate Learning Difficulties and Specific Learning Needs)</p>	<p>Amid other things, students classified as having cognition and learning needs may have specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, or moderate learning difficulties, where there may be broader challenges around numeracy and literacy. The learning needs may also be greater and students may require further, bespoke intervention so they can thrive within the school’s taught curriculum and extracurricular. Support within this area at St Mary’s includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working with Inclusion Staff training in supporting students with dyslexia. ▪ Time and support for children with additional needs to process information and ideas. ▪ Access to the curriculum and independent learning through the use of support staff, IT and specific interventions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small, targeted withdrawal groups to improve skills in areas such as Literacy and Numeracy, such as school's 'Fresh Start' or IDL programmes. ▪ Assessments of students for Exam Access Arrangement for school assessments and external examinations. ▪ Support and guidance from SENDOS to ensure barriers to learning are identified and acted upon. ▪ Learning aides such as coloured overlays and reading rulers to help support students within school. ▪ Regular student assessment and the reporting of achievement and progress to staff, parents and carers.
<p>Social, Emotional and Mental Health (e.g., Emotional Difficulties, Mental Health Conditions, Social Difficulties)</p>	<p>Students who are identified as having social, emotional and mental health needs may require additional support and care due to the impact that this may have upon their learning, progress and achievement. This support may also be provided from a pastoral and behavioural perspective, therefore strong links exist between the SEND Department and the school's Pastoral Team. Types of support that we provide for students with social, emotional and mental health needs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school provides exceptional pastoral care for all students. Each student has a Form Tutor, their first port of call, with all Year Groups having their own Head of Year. Heads of Year are led by Key Stage Leaders who are, in turn, led by the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral. The Assistant Headteacher SEND communicates regularly with the Assistant Headteacher Pastoral, therefore both the SEND Department and Pastoral Team work extremely well together to provide the very best support, care and guidance to all students, including those with SEND. ▪ The school provide comprehensive pastoral and safeguarding support for all students through very regular input via Form Time, assemblies, group sessions, the Personal Development curriculum, Awareness Weeks and Parental Information Evenings. ▪ Individual students receive excellent pastoral support from Pastoral Leaders within school, with care given to the highest standard, involving parents, the school nurse, school counsellor, GP and other external agencies. ▪ The school has two school counsellors who support students fully with their mental, emotional and physical health. ▪ We seek support from external agencies such as School Health, Children's and Young Peoples' Service (CYPS), Child and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS) as well as Children's Services. ▪ The school has an outstanding behaviour climate with behavioural policies based on encouraging students to make positive decisions that are then acknowledged within the school's celebration of student success policy. ▪ If a student with SEND engages in serious, poor behaviour, the student's additional needs are always considered when making a judgment and decision regarding sanctions moving forward. ▪ Within the SEND Department, one-to-one and small group sessions take place focusing on emotional understanding and social skills. ▪ We have a specialist SEND area, the Inclusion Suite which has a dedicated quiet sensory area, where students on the SEN register, as well as students with other emotional/pastoral needs, can visit at designated times if they feel they need some quiet time/support. ▪ The Inclusion Department runs various intervention programmes for students who are struggling with numeracy and literacy, building confidence and self-esteem. ▪ The Inclusion Department has delivered 'Key Skills' sessions for students of varying ages groups, to ensure all students are equipped with key skills for the modern world. ▪ Where a student has SEND and is also a Looked After Child, we have a designated teacher and LAC coordinators in school to ensure students are fully supported. ▪ We have an on-site spirituality team to assist with spiritual and emotional development.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A huge variety of clubs run before school, during social times and afterschool, providing students with SEND with a range of extracurricular activities. ▪ We use risk assessments and take action to ensure the safety and inclusion of all students within all activities, including external trips, visits and residential. ▪ We work closely with our feeder primary schools to ensure effective transition. Pastoral Leaders meet with all Year 6 teachers and Headteachers from every primary school where Year 6 students are enrolling into our Year 7 cohort. Students with SEND in Year 6 have specific transition days at school, in advance of the new school year, to increase their familiarity and confidence with the school, its site and our key staff. All relevant SEND information between transition points is discussed and implemented with teaching and support staff. All students with SEND in year 9 and above are provided with excellent Information, Advice and Guidance concerning their next steps after school and future study and career plans. There is a particular focus on this for year 11 students to ensure they receive the most appropriate post-16 provision for them. ▪ Staff receive regular, high quality continued professional development around SEND, including support for emotional, physical and mental health. ▪ The school's Local Governing Body are updated regularly with regards to the progress, achievement and support that students with SEND are offered, with regular and purposeful monitoring and evaluation taking place. <p><i>The above examples of support offered should also be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy (please see school website).</i></p>
<p>Sensory and Physical Needs (e.g., Hearing/Visual Impairment, Multi-sensory Impairment, Physical Disabilities and Medical Needs)</p>	<p>Amongst other things, students classified as having sensory and physical needs may require support with a visual or hearing impairment. They may have medical needs that affect their progress and ability to learn. Support we provide for students includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support and aides to ensure access to the curriculum and develop independent learning. ▪ Designated first aid trained staff within the SEND Department and across school. ▪ Support from agencies such as Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapists. ▪ Access to medical interventions. We seek advice and guidance from the Health Service to ensure barriers to success are reduced or removed. ▪ A collaborative approach through working closely with SENDOS Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Teams to ensure all students' needs are met. ▪ Disabled toilets on the ground, first and second floor. ▪ Entrances to our school with wheelchair access. ▪ A lift to allow ease of movement between our ground, first and second floor. ▪ Specific risk assessments around external trips/visits. ▪ Specific risk assessments for fire evacuation for relevant students with SEND. ▪ Small group or targeted intervention programmes to help students improve skills, for instance, The Motor Planning programme and Static and Dynamic Balance programme, both developed by Paediatric Occupational Therapy.

The above overview of our SEND provision endeavours to provide a flavour of the different ways in which we support our students with SEND here at St Mary's. Due to the school's central aims of being a truly inclusive, comprehensive academy, we strive to support all students fully whilst encouraging every student to play an active role in all aspects of school life. Therefore, the school's teaching, learning, curriculum and pastoral care is available and accessible by all.

Our curriculum intent, implementation and impact are designed to ensure that students with SEND and their needs are central to the quality of education that is provided. The information below outlines how SEND provision runs through all aspects of our curriculum here at St Mary's:

Intent	Implementation	Impact
<p>At St Mary's, our purpose for SEND is to ensure that all children receive a high-quality and ambitious education regardless of need or disability. We believe that it is essential that our students are equipped with the skills needed to become independent, inquisitive learners both in and out of the classroom.</p> <p>Through high quality planning, teaching, learning and provision we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pride ourselves on early identification of SEND and intervention to ensure that progress and opportunities are maximised. ▪ Ensure that all children have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is scaffolded and adapted to enable all students to understand the relevance and purpose of learning. ▪ Develop students' key skills, functional skills and life skills to promote independence and resilience. ▪ Monitor and review the progress of students with SEND using a student centred approach. ▪ Ensure that the learning environment is accessible and takes into account the needs of different learners. ▪ All students with SEND have their own bespoke 'Pupil Passport' that is then shared with the student's teachers to ensure that the teaching, learning and assessment received is tailored to the child or young person's needs. This Pupil Passport includes information regarding the student's specific SEND, strategies that staff should use with that student as well as information that the child would like staff to know about them. ▪ Provide strong continued professional development for staff in relation to SEND, ensuring that the training is practical as well as theoretical to ensure training, 	<p>At St Mary's all teachers are teachers of SEND as we believe that through our approach to 'quality first teaching' every teacher must be capable of teaching students with SEND to the highest standard. As such, inclusion is a thread that runs through every area of the school. This notion of inclusivity is complemented through the excellent collaboration between senior leaders, middle leaders, teachers, support staff, external agencies, parents and most importantly, our amazing students. Therefore, here at St Mary's, students with SEND are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fully included in all aspects of the school day. ▪ As with all students in school, they are supported in their learning through our quality first teaching approach, where lessons are appropriately scaffolded according to students' needs, in order to ensure all students reach their full potential. ▪ All students, including students with SEND, are recognised as children of God and, as such, every child has God-given gifts and talents to grow, develop, share and celebrate. ▪ On occasion, to support specific needs fully, a small number of students will access individualised support, through 1:1 sessions that support life skills, numeracy and literacy. Purposeful intervention can provide immense benefits therefore individualised work/small group work has its place in amongst a broad and balanced curriculum. ▪ Students with SEND have further support from Inclusion Staff, with all EHCP students having access to Learning Support Assistants during lessons based upon need. ▪ Where appropriate internal and external services provide additional support with speech, hearing and 	<p>As a result:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Here at St Mary's, students feel safe, happy and respected. ▪ All students are provided with the opportunity to develop themselves spiritually, with students acquiring a strong moral and ethical compass. ▪ Student behaviour is outstanding. ▪ Students feel included, considered and comfortable. ▪ Difference is celebrated, allowing students to be the person they want to be in the knowledge that the environment here at St Mary's is a tolerant, compassionate, forward thinking school. ▪ Engagement in school is excellent with SEND student attendance being strong. ▪ Students develop key skills, knowledge and understanding within high quality lessons. ▪ SEND students have access to and engage in a variety of extracurricular clubs. ▪ Achievement of all students, including SEND, is very strong. At the end of Year 11, students with SEND studying GCSE/Vocational subjects achieve higher progress, on average, than non-SEND students nationally. ▪ Many students with SEND remain at St Mary's by transitioning into our Sixth Form, where SEND support and provision is equally as strong. Those who leave St Mary's at the end of Year 11, do so having developed good independence and life skills. Those students are supported fully in their transition into post-16 education, training and workplaces.

<p>techniques and strategies can be implemented within the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work in partnership with parents and carers. ▪ Work closely with external agencies and other professionals to support our students with SEND. 	<p>language development, such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, CYPS, CAMHS and the Local Authority, we use those adults to deliver bespoke programmes tailored to each student's individual needs.</p>	
<p><i>*The above should be read in conjunction with the school's Teaching and Learning expectations.</i></p> <p>For more information on the impact of our curriculum for students with SEND please see the testimonials by parents of children and young people with SEND and by the children and young people themselves in the 'SEND' section of our school website</p>		

SEND Provision: Important Contacts

- The school's complaints policy

In a caring school, such as St Mary's, we wish to resolve any concerns, complaints, issues or problems, as informally as possible and in ways that are fair, impartial, simple, confidential, non-adversarial, fast, effective and appropriate. Therefore, anyone who has concerns of any kind should first discuss the matter with the school. Every effort will be made to resolve the matter informally first. Only if the complaint cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, will more formal action be needed. Should this be the case then please refer to the school's complaints policy which can be found on the website and is linked [here](#).

Outlined below are relevant, external contacts that may be useful to students with SEND and their families:

- Newcastle Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Offers impartial information, advice and support in relation to a child's SEND. This service is managed by Sarah Francis who can be contacted via telephone on 0191 2116255 or via email at sarah.francis@newcastle.gov.uk or you can access their website [here](#).

- Northeast Special Needs Network

Supports families with disabled children and young people from birth to 25 years. Telephone 0191 281 2485 or email admin@nsnn.org.uk

- Newcastle Families Information Service

Provides a guide to local organisations, childcare and events.

- Helpful websites:

- The National Autistic Society: www.autism.org.uk
- Dyslexia Action: www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: www.adhd.org.uk

- A link to Newcastle City Council's 'Local Offer' website can be found on our school website, within the 'SEND' tab.

For any further information regarding SEND queries, please contact our Assistant Headteacher SEND, Ms Mullan, here at school using either our school phone number (0191 2153260) or school email address (admin@st-marys.newcastle.sch.uk).