

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

Christian Vision of St Thomas' Church of England Primary School

Growing together through faith in Jesus Christ '*Let all you do be done in love*' (1 Corinthians 16. 14).

Knowing God through Jesus in our lives let us share, experience and live happiness, laughter and joy in a welcoming, inclusive and loving Christian place.

In the eyes of God and with all your heart let us embrace opportunities to learn, achieve and celebrate success and difference.

By sharing the fruits of the spirit let us shine out for others to see that we are tolerant, respectful, wise and hopeful in this community and God's world.

In journey and love, remember '*I am with you always*' (Matthew 28.20)

We feel that this statement sums up succinctly what we wish to achieve at St Thomas' for our school community.

Our Inclusive Church School Statement

We believe in an inclusive school – a school which does not discriminate on any level, including economic power, mental health, mental ability, physical ability, gender, age, race or sexuality. We believe in a school which welcomes, accepts and seeks the flourishing and growth of all people, both pupils and staff. We acknowledge that all people are made in the image of God and are unique and precious to him. Our school is a place where we seek to respect all people and to love one another as Jesus taught us, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Everyone is welcome here.

Special Educational Needs Information

As a school community we work very closely with our parents and carers to support all pupils to achieve their full potential, with an equal focus upon children's academic achievement and their development as a whole child. We provide high quality teaching for all pupils, with a clear focus upon inclusion within a broad, balanced and engaging curriculum.

Roles and responsibilities within school.

At St. Thomas' our Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator, Mrs Jackie Parker, is responsible for the organisation and co-ordination of specific provision to support individual pupils with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND). We regularly liaise with all staff to monitor the progress of all pupils and identify, where necessary, further support for an individual child or group of children where progress in a particular area is slower than expected.

What is SEND?

At different times within a child's school career, they may have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). The SEND Code of Practice states that:

"A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age.
- 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."

If a pupil is identified as having a Special Educational Need or Disability, we will strive to offer provision that is 'additional to or different from' the normal differentiated curriculum which is intended to support the pupil to overcome any barriers to learning.'

How do we identify SEND?

We regularly monitor the progress of all our pupils, with staff continually assessing and monitoring all pupils within their class to ensure they are on track to achieve their full potential. We have a whole school system for tracking the progress of all pupils, which includes pupil progress meetings with our Senior Leadership Team.

In order to effectively assess and support your child within school we work very closely with parents and carers and, at times, utilise the support of a wide range of different professionals who have access to specific assessment tools that help us to more effectively meet the specific needs of an individual pupil. These agencies may include:

- Speech and Language Therapist
- Play Therapist
- Attendance Officers
- School Health Advisor
- Visual Impairment Support Team

- Hearing Impairment Support Team
- Educational Psychologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Health Professionals
- Social Care Team
- Inclusion Team
- Child and adult mental health services (CAMHS)
- Parents

Our school environment

At St Thomas' we believe in quality inclusion and participation for all. We aim to create a learning environment that flexibly meets the needs of all our learners and that positively reflects the diversity of their backgrounds, interests and experiences.

Pupils will, wherever possible, be encouraged to contribute their views when creating their Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Pupils are also encouraged to attend and participate within review meetings.

All pupils have access to the full range of extra-curricular and residential activities that are offered.

What is the Local Offer?

The Local Offer was first introduced in the Green Paper (March 2011) as a local offer of all services available to support children with SEND and their families. This easy to understand information will set out what is normally available in schools to help children with SEND as well as the options available to support families who need additional help to care for their child.

What will it do?

The Local Offer should provide parents and carers with information about how to access services in their area, as well as what they can expect from those services. Within Education, it will let parents, carers and young people know how individual schools and colleges will support them to achieve their full potential. During the last year, the Local Offer Steering Group has developed 14 key questions for schools about how individual schools aim to support both the pupils and their parents, in order for parents to make informed decisions about how to best support their child's needs.

Below are St. Thomas' responses to these questions.

1. How will the staff at St. Thomas' know if my child needs extra help?

- We receive information from our parents and carers, nurseries and other school settings that children attend before they enter our school. Miss Johnson, our Reception teacher, visits all pupils before they start our Reception class within their previous setting to discuss children's interests and identify any individual needs.
- Speech and Language Screening takes place for all our pupils within the Foundation Stage, with small group support provided to target any particular area pupils find difficult. We liaise with a private Speech and Language Therapist who provides support for staff and also some small group Speech and language sessions.
- Through regular observations and assessments, staff will gain a clear understanding of the gap or gaps in your child's understanding or learning, which are discussed with parents during Parents' Evenings. If members of staff are concerned about the progress of a particular pupil these concerns are shared with Mrs Parker, our SEND co-ordinator. Additional interventions are highlighted to provide support to overcome a particular barrier to their learning, which is then monitored and evaluated to ensure pupils have made progress within the targeted area.
- The progress of all our pupils is monitored regularly by class teachers and the Senior Leadership Team as part of our pupil progress meetings, where discussions take place about additional support that has been completed and the impact of this for the individual pupil or group of pupils concerned.

2. What do I do if I think my child has a Special Educational Need or Disability?

- We meet regularly with parents and carers and actively encourage you to share any concerns you might have as early as possible. Class teachers are always available at the end of most school days to discuss any concerns.
- In addition, you can always discuss any concerns you might have with Mrs Parker (SEND co-ordinator) or our Head Teacher, Mr Moss.

3. How will the staff at St. Thomas' support my child?

- The individual class teacher will take responsibility for the daily provision for your child and will be supported and advised by our SEND co-ordinator, Mrs Parker. Together they will identify additional support that is hoped will impact positively upon your child's progress. This additional support will be planned for within our school Provision Map, delivered by staff during the course of the school day and the impact of the intervention evaluated and shared

with you.

- Class teachers will discuss with you any support they think would benefit your child, that is additional to and different from what is normally offered to all children within a particular class.
- We will monitor the progress of all children receiving additional support and evaluate the impact of provision in order to ensure the support we have put in place is having an impact on your child's attainment.
- If it is felt, through discussions with yourself and staff, that your child would benefit from a specific in-school assessment or the involvement of a particular specialist service then we would obtain your permission and complete all required documentation before proceeding.
- We actively seek the involvement of individual children, where appropriate, to support us in identifying what they find particularly difficult and the strategies that most effectively support them as they learn.
- Mrs Parker evaluates the progress of all pupils with SEND and reports directly to the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors. In addition, your child's class teacher regularly updates senior leaders on the progress of all pupils within their class.

4. How will the curriculum at St. Thomas' be matched to my child's individual needs?

- Staff provide high quality teaching, which is carefully differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils within the class. Specific resources are located and adapted for individual pupils in order for them to effectively access the curriculum or the environment.
- The broad and balanced nature of our curriculum, alongside a multi-sensory approach to teaching and learning ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to demonstrate their strengths and build their confidence.
- Pupils at St. Thomas' have specific next step targets within Reading, Writing and Maths. In addition, our staff provide pupils with individual checklists for particular subjects or themes regarding important elements that your child should include within a particular piece of work.
- If your child is not making the expected progress, we aim to highlight this at the earliest possible opportunity. We use our assessments of your child to identify specific gaps in their understanding, which we will target within a smaller intervention group run mostly by our staff, although in a small number of cases these are delivered by a specific outside agency e.g. Speech and Language Therapist, Play Therapist or Visual Impairment Teacher.

- The effectiveness of individual interventions are regularly evaluated by staff and shared with parents on an informal basis and more formally throughout the year at review meetings and parent's evenings.
- Further specific support may also be provided for an individual pupil through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This means that your child has been identified by a range of specialist professionals as needing a particularly high level of individual or small group teaching, which the school will seek to provide within their Provision Map.

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

- Staff are available each morning within their classrooms before school where parents can share quick messages and information. In addition, staff are available to have more detailed discussions at the end of the most school days. Teaching Assistants and Mrs Parker (SEND co-ordinator) are also available to discuss any concerns you have about your child, the support provided and their progress.
- Annual reports and termly Parents' Evenings give all parents and carers regular feedback on their child's progress, individual reading, writing and mathematics targets along with information about attitudes to learning, behaviour and friendship groups.
- Outside services that work directly with your child will provide reports and information about attainment, expected progress and medical conditions, such as speech and language or visual impairments.
- If your child is identified as needing a school based Individual Learning Plan (ILP) to support your child's learning then a series of specific, small step targets will be set in order to move their learning forward. We would look to actively involve both parents and your child in helping the school to create these, and then reviewing targets at regular intervals, usually three times a year or more if needed.

6. What support will there be for my child's overall emotional health and wellbeing at St. Thomas'?

- The well-being of all our pupils is at the centre of everything we do at St. Thomas'. Pupils are supported with their social and emotional development throughout the school day, both within the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. Personal, Social, Health and Cultural Education (PSHCE) is an integral part of our curriculum and is also taught explicitly

throughout each term. In addition, we offer a mindfulness programme for all our Key Stage 2 pupils.

- Additional support from specialist staff is arranged as required for individual pupils and an individual plan may be created for those with the highest need.
- We clearly set out our expectations, rewards and sanctions within our Behaviour Policy, which is followed by all staff. A copy of this can be found on our school website or can be obtained from our school office.
- We regularly monitor attendance, support pupils who are returning to school after absence and take identified actions to prevent prolonged unauthorised absence.
- We have several staff who are trained in paediatric first aid and all staff have received defibrillator training following a donation from Keiran's Cause. We also have a defibrillator in school. Specific staff are trained to support the medical needs of an identified pupil or group of pupils, where necessary and in some cases all staff receive training e.g. Epi-pen training. We follow our Medicine Administration policy. If your child needs medication to be administered in school then you are asked to provide written details.
- We regularly ask pupils for their views through our School Council and the use of simple questionnaires.

7. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by St. Thomas'?

At St. Thomas' we are able to access a range of agencies to provide us with additional expertise to support us in most effectively meeting the individual needs of your child. Some of these services are accessed via a referral system and will sometimes mean children are placed on a waiting list before they are able to access this support. These include:

- Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- Speech and Language Therapy Service (SALT)
- Play Therapist
- Visual Impairment Team (VI)
- Hearing Impairment Team (HI)

- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- School Health Advisors (SHA)
- Paediatrician (for a specialised diagnosis of specific conditions including ASD & ADHD)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Additional Health Care Professionals

In addition, we also work closely with Support Teachers for Learning, Social Services, Parent Partnership and our Community Police.

8. What training have staff had or are going to access to support children and young people with SEND?

- We have a rolling program of training and support for staff based upon the current needs of the pupils within our school. Staff are provided with more individualised training, if they are supporting an individual pupil or group of pupils with more specific needs.
- Mrs Parker, our SEND Coordinator is a qualified and experienced teacher and SEND co-ordinator who receives ongoing SEND training in specific areas. In addition, we are part of a number of SEND cluster groups including Warrington Local Authority and Chester Diocese SEND cluster groups, as well as a local SEND cluster group in order to share good practice between schools.
- All our teachers hold qualified teacher status and all staff members, including HLTAs and TAs, receive regular training to best support our pupils with SEND. In addition, all our staff have received training in the area of Dyslexia, Makaton sign language and the use of Numicon to support the teaching of Mathematics.
- In addition some of our staff have undertaken specialist training in the following areas:
 - The delivery of specific speech and language programmes that have been tailored to the needs of individual pupils, including Talkabout. In these cases, we work closely with our link Speech and Language Therapists.
 - All staff are currently learning basic Makaton sign language, under the direction of our

link Speech and Language Therapist.

- The delivery of Braille, tailored to the needs of an individual pupil, working closely with the Visual Impairment Team.

9. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips and provision for access to afterschool clubs?

- Our Inclusion Policy promotes the involvement of all our pupils in all aspects of the curriculum including activities outside the classroom.
- Risk assessments are carried out for all school visits including residential trips and reasonable adjustments are made as required. In some cases, parents and specialist teachers support us in creating the risk assessments, particularly where pupils have specific medical concerns.
- Frequent Health and Safety audits are conducted to ensure that school consistently provides a safe environment that all our pupils can easily access.
- Both, before and after school care as well as after school clubs are available to all our pupils and reasonable adjustments can be made to support the specific needs of individual pupils.

10. How accessible is our school environment?

- Our school building is barrier free and is housed on one level, with easy access to all parts of our school.
- We have an Accessibility Policy in place and wherever possible, make reasonable adjustments to improve the accessibility of our environment to meet the specific needs of pupils, parents and carers.
- We have a disabled toilet large enough to accommodate changing if required.
- We have an identified disabled parking space within our car park for use at all times.
- Through our yearly data collection forms, we monitor the range of specific needs and languages spoken by families within our school. We will always endeavour to make use of translation websites or arrange for a translator to attend meetings to ensure complete access

to discussions as required.

11. How will St. Thomas' prepare and support my child as they start our school, transfer to a new education setting or the next stage of education and life?

At St. Thomas' we recognise that transition into and between classes can be difficult for any pupil, but particularly so for pupils with SEND. We take steps to ensure that any transition is as smooth as possible.

For pupils entering Nursery:

We offer an opportunity for parents and carers to view our school and meet our staff. In addition, we also offer afternoon visits of approximately 1 ½ hours for your child, parents and carers. Additional visits can be arranged for specific pupils in discussion with parents and staff.

For pupils entering Reception:

We offer an opportunity for parents and carers to view our school and meet our staff. Miss Johnson, our Reception teacher, visits all pupils within their current pre-school setting prior to pupils visiting school. We offer a half day visit for all pupils and parents, with additional further visits arranged for specific pupils in discussion with parents and staff. In addition, parents are invited to an induction meeting where they meet the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One team, share our induction arrangements and familiarise themselves with classroom routines ready for September.

For pupils moving to another school:

We will contact the pupil's new school, particularly their class teacher and school SEND co-ordinator to ensure staff are fully aware of a pupil's individual needs, the support that was provided for them and the strategies that have effectively been used within our school. We will also ensure that all their records are transferred as quickly as possible to their new school.

For pupils transferring classes within our school:

Staff hold transition meetings during the summer term to share information and discuss pupils' strengths, areas for further development and the strategies that have been most successful during the course of the year. Additional transition opportunities are planned for children with SEND to ensure pupils feel confident within their new environment and, where appropriate, we make

effective use of learning stories to support this process. Specific opportunities are provided, if required, for parents to meet their child's new teacher to ensure any concerns can be shared. All pupils have the opportunity to meet their new teacher and visit their new classroom during the Summer term. In addition, a transition book will be made for some children to support this process which will include photos of the new classroom and the staff members working within the new year group. This will be shared with parents so that we ensure a smooth a transition as possible is made for children with SEND. Further specific transition arrangements are implemented during the final half term for pupils changing Key Stages so they become familiar with the new entrances, procedures etc. that they will use.

For pupils transferring to Secondary school:

Mrs Lister, our Year 6 teacher and Mrs Parker, our SEND co-ordinator meet with the Secondary School SEND/Inclusion Manager to discuss in detail the specific needs of your child. The Secondary School SEND/Inclusion Manager is invited to attend any Annual Reviews that we hold before your child transfers. Parents of pupils with SEND transferring to Bridgewater High School are offered an opportunity to meet the SEND/Inclusion Manager individually as part of our Spring Parents' Evening arrangements. Where pupils transfer to other settings, alternative arrangements are made. Secondary school staff are offered the opportunity to observe pupils within their Year 6 class and where possible, your child will visit their new school on a fact gathering mission at least once and if it is felt to be beneficial, on several occasions, before the official transition days.

12. How are resources allocated and matched to pupils Special Educational Need or Disability at St. Thomas'?

- Our school budget is received from the Local Authority which includes money for supporting pupils with SEND. The Head Teacher identifies a budget for SEND in consultation with the school governors and based upon the needs of our existing pupils. The school may receive an additional amount of 'top-up' funding for pupils with specific higher level needs.
- We use our SEND funding in a wide variety of ways to most effectively support pupils throughout our school. This could include individual or small group support, the purchase of new resources or specialist assessments, as required.
- We hold regular update meetings to monitor the impact of targeted interventions and SEND provision throughout school. Our SEND co-ordinator regularly updates the Head Teacher and the Governing Body regarding the progress of pupils with SEND. This regular evaluation process helps staff to refine further support and intervention programmes as we strive to meet pupils' specific individual needs.

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

- Each child is assessed individually according to the SEND Code of Practice and Local Authority guidance. A personalised support programme is developed through discussions with individual pupils, parents and carers, class teacher, teaching assistants, additional specialised support teachers and health professionals, if required.
- All class teachers meet with the Head Teacher and Head of Key Stage each term to discuss pupils' progress.
- We look closely at the provisions that have been in place and examine their effectiveness and impact upon your child's progress within an identified area.
- Additional assessments from outside services, such as Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists, will help us decide what type of support and resources are needed to effectively meet the individual needs of your child.
- Some pupils will have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This provides specific, small step targets to support your child to make progress within a particular area by carefully targeting the gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This will be reviewed with you three times a year. Pupils with an EHCP will have an Annual Review, where the parents and carers meet with all professionals actively supporting their child to review progress and set challenging targets for the coming year.
- The SEND co-ordinator oversees all additional support and regularly shares updates with the senior leadership team and the SEND Governor.

14. How are parents involved at St. Thomas'? How can I be involved?

- We work in close partnership with all parents to support the well-being, learning needs, progress and aspirations of all our pupils.
- We operate an open door policy, actively encouraging parents to contact their child's class teacher both formally and informally as required.
- Our school website: www.st-thomas.co.uk contains information for parents about our

curriculum.

- We operate a school text messaging and email service for all our parents.
- We write regular newsletters outlining forthcoming events, as well as sharing information about what has been happening within school.
- We actively encourage parents, grandparents and carers to become as involved as possible in school life in a number of different ways:
 - St. Thomas' PFTA meet regularly to organise a wide variety of fund-raising events throughout the year to raise money for additional resources.
 - Becoming a helper within a class, working with an individual or small group to complete a wide range of curricular activities including baking, creative activities, playing a range of games, hearing readers or supporting pupils to learn number facts, spelling patterns etc.
 - Becoming a helper on a class trip.
 - Becoming a parent representative within our Governing Body.

15. Who can I contact for further information?

- Your child's class teacher is your first point of contact.
- Parents are always welcome to contact Mrs Parker, our SEND co-ordinator directly, for further information and support.

Useful contact details:

Head Teacher: Mr Ian Moss

Deputy Head Teacher: Mrs Vickie Toft

SEND Co-ordinator & Key Stage One Leader: Mrs Jackie Parker

EYFS Leader: Miss Charlotte Johnson

SEND Governor: Mrs Melanie Girdharry

School Phone Number: 01925 268722

Head Teacher e-mail: stthomas_primary_head@warrington.gov.uk

Deputy Head Teacher e-mail: stthomas_primary_deputy@warrington.gov.uk

SEND Co-ordinator e-mail: stthomas_SENCO@warrington.gov.uk