

SEN Information Report ('School Offer')
January 2018

1. How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

Through high quality teaching, teachers continually assess pupils' progress through daily observation, marking and feedback. Each term, teachers monitor the attainment and review the progress of each child. Pupils falling behind Age Related Expectations (ARE) will be identified through formal or statutory test results; school based tracking, informal classroom and playground observations. For pupils identified as below ARE in any term or whose progress is less than expected, teachers use their professional judgement to identify potential barriers to learning and plan additional provision accordingly; this may include targeted interventions, additional in-class adult support or referral to external agencies for specialist advice. The school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) meet with all teachers termly to discuss attainment outcomes, identify any barriers to learning and agree actions moving forwards to support progress. Identified actions are detailed on the class provision map with a focus on identified areas of difficulty.

High quality teaching is targeted at the areas of weakness, reasonable adjustments to classroom practice may be applied and the child's progress monitored over time in-line with the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' cycle recommended by the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (SEN CoP) 2015.

If there is an indicator of a range of learning difficulties, then the pupil may be recorded as having Special Educational Needs Support (SEN Support) following consultation with parents. Where a child is identified as having multiple or complex needs, further advice may be sought by the SENCO from external professionals after discussing concerns with parents and gaining their informed consent. A personalised SEN Support Plan may be put in place for such children developed with input from the child, teacher, parents and SENCO; these are reviewed termly. Education and Health Care Plans (EHC Plan) have replaced Statements of SEN and are aimed at those children with profound and complex SEN and disabilities where an assessment of needs has been agreed by a multi-agency group of professionals including the Local Authority (Hertfordshire County Council). An EHC Plan is available from birth to age 25. If you require further information, please contact the SENCO by email (senco@thomascoram.herts.sch.uk)

The Thomas Coram CE School has a strong sense of community, and parents have many opportunities to speak to staff if they are concerned about the progress of their child. Parents should in the first instance discuss any concerns with their child's class teacher. The class teacher may then seek advice from the SENCO to determine the best course of action. Class teachers are available on the playground at the end of every day; parents can also make an appointment to see any member of staff by contacting the school office in person, by email or telephone.

Our pupils have many opportunities to articulate concerns or anxieties about their own learning. They are taught to self-assess their learning, and to enter into discussions with teachers about their understanding, knowledge and skills. Teaching assistants also build relationships with pupils and support their learning in class and through intervention groups where needed. In addition, staff closely monitor the behaviour of all pupils, looking out for indications of anxiety or difficulties that the pupils may not be able to articulate themselves.

2. How will school staff support my child?

The Thomas Coram CE School strongly prioritises the provision of high quality, whole-class teaching. Class teachers are responsible for the learning and progress of all pupils in their class including those with SEN. They will also provide for children with SEN in their class and follow the school's procedures for identifying, assessing and making provision to meet those needs. If progress continues to be less than expected, it may be necessary to have support or targeted intervention. This support could be an additional learning group or individual support led by a trained adult. This may take place in the classroom as part of the lesson or away from the class depending on the needs of the pupil. Interventions are usually for a specific period of time and progress is reviewed to inform next steps.

Where interventions involve teaching away from the main class, the teacher still retains responsibility for the child and works closely with support staff to assess, plan and review the impact of interventions and how skills are applied in the whole-class context.

The SENCO oversees and co-ordinates all special educational provision; providing advice and support, monitoring and evaluation as well as links with external professionals.

The SLT and SENCO closely monitor the quality of provision, and provide support, advice and training for teachers and teaching assistants as appropriate. The progress of children receiving special educational provision is also monitored by the governing body through the SEN link governor.

3. How will I know how my child is doing?

There are formal opportunities for parents and carers to talk to their child's class teacher each term at consultation evenings. During the year, parents are provided with a summary and a written report. Parents of children with personalised SEN Support Plans are invited to review their child's progress every term, review outcomes of additional provision and plan next steps.

In addition, parents are welcome to arrange a discussion with their child's class teacher or make an appointment with the SENCO. Pupil planners may be used as a regular method of communication for all pupils between parents and teacher. Some families may benefit from a daily method of communication through use of a Home School communication book.

4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?

Teachers assess the learning and attainment of all pupils, plan teaching accordingly and review outcomes. Children's needs are met by careful differentiation and adjusting teaching styles within an inclusive classroom environment. Maths is taught in differentiated classes so pupils are supported and extended in their learning, based on their particular needs, and a higher adult to pupil ratio may be used to help pupils overcome any identified barriers to learning. Some pupils may benefit from a specific targeted intervention programme outside the classroom with trained teaching assistants and teachers for areas such as English, Maths and social skills. Staff will regularly review progress of pupils undertaking these programmes to plan next steps.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

As a caring school, children's overall wellbeing is central to our ethos. We work very hard to develop children as well-rounded, happy, confident young people.

There are many opportunities to celebrate children's achievements, including weekly assemblies for Star of the Week and Head Teacher awards. Each Friday, whole school worship is led by a class, providing pupils the opportunity to perform at least once each term. We take every opportunity for children to have as broad a range of life experiences as we can, to

develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural learning.

We strive to ensure children feel safe by having strong clear routines, consistent expectations and consistent adults in each class. Pupil voice is essential to all decision making, we have a very active School Council. Children are taught to respect each other and their environment and to behave appropriately at all times. The school behaviour policy outlines this in more detail, and school exclusions are rare and only occur as a last resort.

Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility including lunchtime helper, reader, or Maths / Reading Buddies to help build their confidence. PSHE weekly lessons can be used to discuss issues that are most relevant to the class. In addition, teaching assistants may lead social groups to support children's wellbeing through role play activities and social stories, targeting this support where it is most needed.

Some pupils may benefit from a more personalised programme of support and may be offered the opportunity to take part in additional non-curriculum based activities such as art and cooking. Meet and greet support is also available to help some pupils feel calm, settled and ready to learn at the beginning of the day.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

The SENCO co-ordinates the specialist support of a number of external agencies, including the Hertfordshire Integrated Services for Learning (ISL), Dacorum SEND Specialist Support Team, Educational Psychology Team (EPT), Specialist Advisory Service: Communication and Autism Team (SAS CAT), Sensory and Physical Impairment Team (SPIT), Specialist Teachers at the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Base attached to Thomas Coram, Dacorum Educational Support Centre (DESC), Dacorum Family Support Service, Speech and Language Therapy (SALT), and Counselling in Schools Service. School may also directly liaise with the school nurse and other medical professionals as required. Through close links with external agencies, SLT, SENCO, teachers and teaching assistants undergo regular training in different areas of SEN and have developed experience of a range of specialisms. These specialisms both within the school and through links with external professionals include autism, behaviour support, specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, English and Maths interventions.

7. What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

All teaching and learning staff in the school support children with SEN. We believe strongly in an inclusive education, and ensure each child has access to all opportunities in school.

Miss Williamson (Assistant Head) is the designated member of staff (DSP) responsible for safeguarding. All staff have received safeguarding including WRAP (Prevent) training and attend annual Epipen training as appropriate. Some staff are trained in First Aid and most in Hertfordshire Steps, a therapeutic approach to behaviour management.

Our experienced SENCO has completed the Advanced SENCO Award and has recently completed the OCR Level 5 Diploma for Teaching Learners with Dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties. A number of teachers have completed ASD/ADHD and working memory training, metacognition awareness (Growth Mindset) and attended INSET on Inclusive Classroom Environments. Teaching assistants have undertaken phonics, effective reading and Precision Teaching training courses. A number of teaching assistants are also trained in running Fischer Family Trust literacy interventions (FFT, High-5).

8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

Your role as parents is central to your child's education. We value your knowledge and expertise about your child, and strongly believe that we are here to help you best support your child's learning.

We encourage you to talk to your child about the topics they are learning in order to develop their independent thinking and research skills. The yearly curriculum topics are published on our website at the beginning of each academic year. Rich learning experiences linked to the curriculum broaden children's understanding of the world around them.

Regular reading with your child helps them to develop an interest in books as well as reading fluency although we recognise that some families find it difficult to support home learning; our attached SpLD Base publishes helpful parent booklets to support reading and maths at home (<http://www.thomascoram.herts.sch.uk/spldbase/parentinfo/>) We also have a fully resourced library which has fiction, non-fiction books and story CDs for children to borrow. Each class has a dedicated library lesson each week, aimed at promoting an interest in reading. There is also a weekly homework club where a teacher is available to help complete home learning tasks at school.

We also promote a range of parent meetings/workshops, such as those provided by Dacorum Family Services. If your child receives SEN support, we will invite you to discuss your child's progress and any additional provision in place, seeking your views on what you feel is or is not working well.

We also offer opportunities for parents to volunteer in school e.g. hearing readers, helping on visits etc.

9. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

Parents elected by their peers serve on the school's governing body and there is the Friends of Thomas Coram parents' association which is very active. Parents are also invited to share their views by responding to parental questionnaires. We hope to maintain an on-going dialogue with parents about all aspects of their child's development and recommend regular use of the pupil planner for communication with the class teacher. At the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to meet their child's teacher at an informal 'Meet the teacher' evening. This enables parents to hear the expectations and curriculum for the school year ahead and begin an informal dialogue with the teacher regarding their child's education.

There are termly progress reviews for children receiving personalised SEN support which involve parents, school staff and any external professionals as appropriate. At these reviews we assess progress over the preceding term and plan appropriate targets and provision for the term ahead: input from the child and parents is central to this process. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in the SEN support for their child and arrange, by email or telephone through the school office, an appointment to meet with the class teacher. The SENCO is available for meetings or phone calls to discuss any queries or concerns you may have regarding your child's progress or support.

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

Each year group has educational school trips arranged throughout the year. For all trips, a risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that each child is kept safe from harm. All children with SEN are invited to participate in school trips. It may be necessary to undertake individual pupil risk assessments for those pupils whose participation in a trip may be more challenging. We will endeavour to remove barriers to participation e.g. allocate additional adults to support the child, ensure a car/minibus is available to drive the child if the walk is too long,

recommend a practice journey prior to participation in order to familiarise the pupil with the route. We will consult parents to encourage full participation and active engagement of all children. We may even ask you to accompany your child on the trip. Staff to pupil ratios for trips are set by Hertfordshire County Council.

There is a full range of lunchtime and after school clubs as well as peripatetic music teachers available to all pupils. We make every effort to ensure there is something for everyone and listen to pupils' and parents' suggestions for new clubs. We monitor participation of clubs and actively encourage all pupils, as well as those with SEN to widen their experiences and take part in them.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

The school is fully accessible to all. It is housed on a flat single storey site with accessible routes to all classrooms and offices. There is a disabled toilet and the school is wheelchair friendly. Specialised equipment is provided where appropriate for children with SEN and advice is sought from medical and health professionals to ensure all children's health and physical needs are met.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

We ask you to contact your child's teacher in the first instance if you have any queries. The SENCO can be contacted by telephone or email (senco@thomascoram.herts.sch.uk) and is available to meet with any parents who have concerns about their child's overall development, educational progress or any suspected or identified SEN. The Head of School, and Assistant Heads are available to talk with parents. If you wish to make a complaint, the school has a complaints procedure which is available from the school office. The school office is always open during school hours and office staff will direct enquiries to the most appropriate member of staff. Contact can be in person via the school office, by phone (01442 866757) or email to admin@thomascoram.herts.sch.uk

13. 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?

The school is federated with one of its partner infant schools, Victoria, and has very close links with its other partner infant school, Swing Gate, as well as Ashlyns School for secondary transfer. There is a detailed transition programme which takes place in the summer term prior to pupils arriving and leaving Thomas Coram. Teachers and the SENCO visit partner schools to discuss pupils' needs with staff. For specific pupils, we visit them at their school and liaise with parents and key staff to prepare a safe, welcoming environment for them when they start. There is a visit for all parents during the summer term so they have the opportunity to meet their child's new teachers and discuss any specific needs.

All children transferring to Thomas Coram have a tour of the school and take part in a transition day. Pupils moving on to secondary school attend similar transition days at their new school. Some pupils, suggested by their parents or teachers, will be offered additional transition visits to support further familiarisation of the new school environment, and alleviate any anxieties or concerns. Additional visits take place with a key member of staff from the child's current school, staff from the new school and current pupils. Parents are also welcome to bring their child on additional visits if they wish.

Class teachers liaise with previous teachers to plan for any child's specific needs and this may involve parents and professionals prior to transition.

Our SENCO is currently also SENCO at Victoria School, and liaises closely and regularly with

the SENCOs of Swing Gate School and Ashlyns School in order to plan for the future provision of pupils with SEN support. Contact is made with other primary and secondary schools as appropriate.

14. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

The school has an amount identified within its overall budget called the notional SEN budget. This is used for resources to support the progress of children with SEN. It is also used to employ teaching assistants to support children with SEN, buy specialist equipment, books, stationery, or provide training for staff. Where a child requires provision that exceeds the nationally prescribed allocation, additional top-up funding can be applied for through the local authority Exceptional Needs Funding process.

The governing body receive reports on spending and allocation of resources.

15. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

Support is carefully matched to children's needs through identifying barriers to learning, observation of pupils, consultation with class teachers and parents' views. Support is regularly assessed, planned and reviewed based on outcomes. Interventions typically last between 1 and 2 terms, although they may be longer, with the emphasis on early intervention and targeted effective support to minimise any long term need for additional support. For children with more complex neurological or developmental needs, support may be on-going. It is our aim to develop the independence of all pupils to help them prepare for entering secondary school.

16. How can I find information about the local authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disability?

Hertfordshire County Council's local offer can be accessed online at www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer