

## Special Educational Needs School Offer

### A parent and carers guide to SEN at Horsington Church School

#### **We do *our best* to help all children achieve *their best*.**

Horsington is a mainstream school which means that we take children with a range of strengths and challenges and include them in our daily activities. This document sets out Horsington Church School's offer for all children.

Somerset County Council is required to provide support for children who have special educational needs. This is described in their 'Local Offer' which is outlined on their website 'Somerset Choices'. The school's Local Offer is linked to the **Somerset Core Standards**, a framework which describes the entitlement of children and young people in Somerset schools. These standards promote consistency across the local authority. Please follow this link to read more about the Core Standards:

<https://someretchoices.org.uk>

#### **What is a special educational need?**

Children have a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty, sometimes called a learning difference, which means they may need special additional provision to be made for them to achieve their best. Sometimes the need for additional provision is short term, but often it is long term.

#### **How do teachers at Horsington Church School know if a child needs extra help?**

Sometimes we know before a child arrives at Horsington that he/she will need extra help. For instance, it could be that a special need has been identified at pre-school or by a paediatrician. Children with medical needs may require extra help with their learning.

All children at Horsington are monitored closely by their class teachers to see if they are making the progress we would expect. This is done through careful observation, feedback, tests, discussion with the children and parents, and by working alongside them. Class teachers and the head teacher meet each term to discuss the progress of every child in the school. If children do not make expected progress in response to good quality teaching, taking into account different abilities and different ways of learning, they may be considered to have a special educational need (SEN). These children often find it harder to learn than the majority of their peers.

The SEN Code of Practice is the guidance that schools must follow. It states that the four areas of special educational need are:

- cognition and learning
- communication and interaction
- social, emotional development and mental health and wellbeing
- sensory and/or physical needs.

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

It is very helpful if you share any information and concerns you have, old and new, about difficulties your child experiences. Please let us know about any tests carried out as a result of concerns. You know your child better than anyone and can add greatly to our understanding of him/her. You might feel, for instance, that compared to other children of the same age, your child has trouble understanding what's been said or sitting still or paying attention. The best person for you to speak to, at first, is the class teacher. Teachers are usually available for a conversation with parents/guardians at the end of the school day. The teacher might want to make an appointment to meet with you on another day.

## **How will Horsington Church School support my child?**

The education and progress of all children is the responsibility of the class teacher, and is known as Universal Provision or Wave 1. Class teachers divide their time between all the children in the class. At Horsington there are teaching assistants (TAs) in each class at least every morning. Some children will need a bit of extra support which will be arranged and monitored by the class teacher and provided in a group or individually, usually by the TA. This is known as Wave 2 support. At parents' evenings, which are held twice a year, class teachers will let you know if your child is receiving Wave 2 support. Most children will catch up with their peers as a result of this. If children don't make expected progress, they may need more personalised teaching in response to their precise difficulties. This is called SEN support or Wave 3. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) is responsible for organising Wave 3 support and will inform you if your child has reached Wave 3. At this stage, the SENCo is likely to carry out assessments with a child to decide, with the class teacher, on some very specific targets. A timetable will then be arranged for an adult, probably a TA, to work with the child towards these targets. After about one term of this individual support, more assessment is done to see how much progress the child has made in relation to the targets. This process is cyclical and is called the graduated response.

At Wave 3, the SENCo may request the involvement and advice of a specialist, for example, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or occupational therapist. This will only be done with your agreement and you will be involved in discussions with the specialist. Parents are able to access some services

directly as described in the Somerset County Council's local offer, at [www.somersetchoices.org.uk](http://www.somersetchoices.org.uk)

A very few children will require highly specialised and personalised support for complex and long term difficulties and may have what is called an Education Health Care Plan.

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

Teachers plan lessons and activities which are less or more challenging so that the skills and understanding of all children can develop. This is called differentiation. Class teachers recognise that children with learning difficulties may develop their skills more slowly, or in a different way to others. Therefore, teachers may have different objectives for these children and aim to build bit by bit on what the children can already do. Teachers give children opportunities to practise a particular skill lots of times until the teacher can see that the child is ready to move on.

Children are given resources to support their learning for as long as they need them. This includes interventions in or outside the classroom setting with a teacher or teaching assistant. We use a variety of intervention programmes including Dyscalculia Resources, Read Write Inc, Individualised Literacy Intervention (ILI) and Alph and Omega as well as Project X for reading support. Class teachers act on recommendations they have been given from outside professionals on how to support children in the classroom. The Special Needs Coordinator liaises directly with these agencies in partnership with parents, carers and teachers.

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

Teachers and the school SENCo can advise parents on how to support your child. You will be able to discuss your child's progress at parents' evenings, and, if you feel the need for more frequent feedback and discussion, you are welcome to approach the class teacher. Sometimes when it is felt that very frequent liaison is needed between home and school a message book is set up. Formal written school reports are given to parents of every child at the end of each academic year.

For children at Wave 3, a plan of action is put together, based on the needs of the individual and what we want that child to achieve. If your child is at Wave 3, you will meet each term to be part of this planning process. This might be one meeting a term or a series of shorter meetings as required, at a time to suit you. At these meetings, advice will be given on how to support your child at home. Information from outside specialists will be shared with you. Parents meet with specialists as necessary to discuss how their children are getting on and the way forward.

Class teachers adjust homework to provide the appropriate level of challenge and revision for your child. Children with learning difficulties in English and mathematics will often be given activities to help strengthen basic skills. If you have any concerns about homework or its suitability for your child, please speak to the class teacher. We recognise the enormous role parents/guardians play in the education of their children and are keen to work with you to support you in this. Sometimes we organise events for parents on how to help their children in a specific area, such as reading or mathematics. When specific training for parents is offered locally, the SENCo tries to inform parents for whom this could be useful.

## **What support is there for my child's overall well-being?**

We aim to look at each child in the round, recognising that in order to thrive at school all children need more than good quality teaching alone. Various aspects of children's behaviour, such as the ability to make friends or the ability to deal with disappointment or change, are considered by class teachers and influence the way they manage their classes and plan lessons linked to social and emotional development.

We are very lucky to have The Spinney, a natural, outdoor play-space with a small stream which all children have access to, at specified times. There is a quiet area in the playground for children who prefer this kind of recreation.

Because we are a small school, it is usually very easy for children to approach an adult of their choice to talk about any concerns or issues they may want to share.

If we have on-going concerns about the well-being of children, we may set up an outdoor learning or social skills group to give them support in understanding and managing their difficulties. If we feel your child will benefit from being part of such a group, you will be informed by the class teacher.

## **Medical Needs**

Where necessary and in agreement with parents/carers, medicines may be administered in school. Before this can happen, a medicine consent form is drawn up to ensure the safety of the child and staff. This is signed by the parents/carers and the members of staff involved.

In line with the school's Medical Needs Policy, we put in place medical care plans for children who have special medical needs which can't be managed purely at home. Medical care plans make clear to staff what their responsibilities are towards children with medical needs. Training is received by staff where necessary to support these children.

There is additional funding, called Pupil Premium, from the government for certain children who are entitled to extra support. This entitlement is linked to family income,

a child being cared for or adopted, or having a parent in the armed forces. The school decides how to support these children, using the extra money. On the school's website you can read how the Pupil Premium has been spent.

### **What specialist services and expertise are available at the school or can be accessed by the school?**

When we feel we need to involve a specialist to help us understand a child's barriers to learning and to get support on moving things forward, we can seek advice from the following professionals or teams, once we have the agreement of the parents/guardians.

For children who have more significant difficulties managing their behaviour or emotions, we may make a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). If parents/guardians agree with us that it would be helpful to receive advice or support to manage their children at home, we can get in touch with the Parent and Family Support Advisor.

Educational Psychologist  
Learning Support Advisory Teacher  
Speech and Language Therapist  
Occupational Therapist  
Autism, Communication and Language Service  
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)  
Vision Support Team  
Hearing Support Team  
Parent and Family Support Advisor

Parents/guardians are involved in discussions with specialists about their children.

With the permission of parents/guardians, children's eyesight and hearing is tested in school in Year 1 by a school nurse. In Reception and Year 6, height and weight of children is checked, again with parental permission.

### **Training for staff to support children with SEN?**

Training in different areas is available for staff in Somerset schools, for example, how to support children with difficulties in literacy and mathematics, or children with communication difficulties. We take advantage of what is on offer in line with our requirements, depending on the children in school at any one time.

Teaching assistants or teachers who work with children to support particular areas of need will receive training or advice. When support for children is given by a teaching assistant, it will be overseen by the class teacher or SENCo.

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

We assess the needs of children with SEN very carefully in order to allow all children to go on class trips, as long as it is safe for them to do so. This could mean, for example, that we arrange smaller groups or for an extra adult to be available, or that a child is given special support preparing for the new experience, or that alternative travel arrangements are made in consultation with parents/guardians. We also make sure that medication can be administered as necessary. Sometimes we may ask parents/carers to accompany their children on a trip, if we feel that this level of support is required. A DBS check is required in advance.

## **How accessible is the school environment?**

Our school is made up of old and new buildings. All areas are accessible to someone in a wheelchair and there is a toilet for wheelchair users. Alterations have been made to the site to accommodate children with a visual impairment.

The school has an accessibility plan which is regularly updated to make sure that every aspect of school life is as accessible as possible to all.

## **How will the school support my child when joining Horsington and when transferring to a new school?**

We recognise that moving school can be difficult for a child with SEN and take steps to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible.

When children with special educational needs move to Horsington, we meet to discuss these with you and, where appropriate, with the professionals who have previously worked with them. This is called an Entry Plan Meeting. Often, arrangements are made for children to make extra visits to the school prior to joining. A transition book may be provided to familiarise children with their new class and members of staff.

When children move from one class to another, information is shared with the next teachers. Sometimes we put in place a special plan for a child if we think this would be beneficial. For example, if a child takes a long time to feel comfortable with new people or a new space, we might put together a transition book and arrange for him/her to make extra visits to the new class in advance with a friend.

If your child is moving to another school, we inform the SENCo about his/her needs and pass on all our records. For those children moving to secondary school who we think may find the change particularly difficult, we organise additional visits to the new school and may offer special support, such as sessions with an adult to talk about what to expect and any worries.

## **How are the school's resources allocated to children with SEN?**

The school budget includes money to support children with SEN. We aim to ensure that all children with SEN have their needs met to the best of our ability with the funds available. The SEN budget pays for some of our teaching assistant time. Support is allocated to children on the basis of need. We regularly review our staff, our resources and the level of support we offer the children and make changes as appropriate. If a child's needs are complex or very significant, they may require an Education Health Care Plan.

## **Who can I contact for further information?**

If you would like to consider Horsington for your child, you can ask for an appointment to be shown around the school.

If you wish to discuss your child's educational needs or are unhappy about something regarding your child's schooling, please speak initially to the class teacher. If requested, a meeting to see Sally Elvish, the SENCo, can be arranged. If you continue to have concerns, please make an appointment at the school office to see Mrs Kelly Barge, the Head Teacher.

### Contact details

School office: 01963 370358

Email: [office@horsington.bwmat.org](mailto:office@horsington.bwmat.org)

Web address: [www.horsingtonbwmat.org](http://www.horsingtonbwmat.org)

Somerset Local Offer: [www.somersetchoices.org.uk](http://www.somersetchoices.org.uk)