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# Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) School Information Report

## School Vision & Ethos

At St Matthias, inclusion is a core part of our identity. We believe every child is unique and brings value to our school community. Every member of staff and every child has a positive attitude to others with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and we are all committed to ensure the needs of all learners are catered for. The school environment we create is somewhere where everyone has the right to thrive and feel safe, cared for and supported whatever their race, colour, gender, class, physical challenge, faith, sexual orientation or lifestyle. Everyone in the school has a right to full access to the curriculum; and the right to learn in a caring and considerate environment where staff and children value their contribution to the life of the school. We adopt a strength-based, neuro-affirming approach, which means we seek to understand and respond to how each child learns and experiences the world.

Our teaching is adaptive and inclusive, recognising that *difference is not deficit*.

## Identifying and Understanding Needs

We understand that children's needs emerge in different ways. We would consider if your child would benefit from additional help if:

- Concerns are raised by parents/carers, teachers or the child themselves.
- Limited progress is being made, or progress stalls, or differs from their starting point despite high-quality teaching.
- There is a change in the pupil's behaviour, wellbeing or engagement.
- External agencies inform us of identified needs.

As part of the school's admissions process, home visits or in-school meetings are held with parents/carers and the child before they start the school. This is because we value early identification and would like to work in partnership with families from the start. We would then be able to hold open conversations about how to best support a child's strengths and needs.

If a member of staff has a concern about a child's learning or if they believe that a child needs additional support, they are encouraged to speak to the SENDCO using our internal referral process. Where leaders are concerned about the progress of children's attainment, teachers are supported to create a clear *Assess, Plan, Do, Review* cycle in collaboration with the family and child. This will allow a learning plan to be put in place and external referrals or support can be made.

If the parent or school feels the child requires an education, health & care (EHC) needs assessment, then a request is made with information collated from the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycles and alongside the use of Hackney Education's *Right Support, Right Time* document.

## Areas of Need We Support

We welcome children with a wide range of needs, grouped into four categories:

- Communication and interaction (eg speech and language needs, autism spectrum condition)
- Cognition (thinking) and learning (eg dyslexia, global developmental delay, processing differences)
- Physical and sensory (eg sensory processing differences, physical disabilities)
- Social, emotional and mental health needs. (eg anxiety, trauma-informed needs, ADHD)

## Working with Families and Children

We build strong partnerships with parents and carers, as they know their children best. Parents are provided with a termly provision map which allows them to review outcomes, and are invited to provide their feedback and co-produce support plans. If a parent wants to request an EHC needs assessment and the school is in agreement with this, then the SENDCo will support the parent in completing the request if the school is not yet in a position to make the request (i.e. reports from professionals have not yet been received).

We always involve children in setting goals through child-friendly tools and celebrate their progress alongside parents, where appropriate. We regularly ensure we incorporate children's thoughts and feelings in each progress meeting and annual reviews as their voice is central to how we plan and review support. We seek their input in a way that is meaningful to them and developmentally appropriate.

## Monitoring Progress and Outcomes

Progress is reviewed at least three times a year in collaboration with the class teacher, SENDCO, the child and their family. This allows for plans to remain in place over transitional periods of the year. Additional information around the progress of these children is gathered from children in Pupil progress meetings.

Reviews could include:

- The class teacher working with the SENDCo to discuss individual needs.
- The SENDCo talking to the child and parents/carers to find out their views and needs.
- The SENDCo coming to lessons and working with the child (formal and informal observations)
- Referrals to outside agencies are made (consent from parents/ carers is always obtained first).

When a child has an EHC plan, annual reviews are held to ensure that children are progressing as expected. If it is felt that the EHC plan requires review prior to this schedule, then an emergency annual review is held.

## Supporting Transitions

We know that transitions can be especially challenging for neurodivergent pupils or those with additional needs. At St Matthias, we have a number of strategies to help children transition through different phases of their education:

- Extra visits to their new classrooms
- Y6 to Y7 Additional visits set up for the child to meet new adults in their chosen school
- Transition group work (held by Speech and Language therapist, WAMHS, Young Hackney or Asapce)
- Social Stories
- Use of countdown calendars, visual prompts and diaries.
- Key adult relationships

Every transition is planned with the child's needs and preferences in mind, whether they are joining the school, moving to a different year group or transitioning to secondary school.

## Inclusive Teaching Approaches

Inclusion is at the heart of how we teach at St Matthias. We are committed to inclusive, high-quality teaching for all via:

1. A positive, predictable and supportive environment for ALL pupils
2. All staff having a clear understanding of every child's need based on the "assess, plan, do, review" approach
3. Adaptive teaching rooted in each child's learning profile

4. All pupils having access to high quality teaching
5. The use of visuals, prompts and structure reliable routines
6. The use of targeted groups and one to one interventions (overseen by the class teacher and SENDCO)
7. The use of support staff to support pupils (overseen by the class teacher)
8. The focus on emotional regulation and learning readiness

### **Adapting the Curriculum and Environment**

When a pupil has been identified as having additional needs, there may need to be adjustments made to enable them to access the full curriculum and make progress. Members of support staff may be allocated to work with the pupil in a 1:1 or small focus group to target more specific needs.

If a child has been identified as having a special educational need, they will have an individual support plan which would include SMART targets that children will be supported to achieve.

If appropriate, specialist equipment may be given to the pupil e.g. writing slopes, concentration cushions, pen/pencil grips.

Within our adapted offer, children may be offered:

- chunked instructions
- sensory tools
- movement breaks
- task planners
- assistive technology
- access to a sensory-friendly space
- learning aids

### **Specialist Support and Services**

The school works closely with a speech and language therapist, specialist teacher and an Educational Psychologist who all attend the school regularly. Other additional support comes in the form of:

- Specific resources to help the learner e.g. sensory aids, assistive technology or visuals support.
- TA adult support in class that promotes independence.
- Precision teaching from a member of the senior leadership team (SLT).
- Interventions provided by either a teacher or teaching assistant e.g. speech and language, phonics, motor skills.
- Invitation to a particular club.
- Support from Education Mental Health Practitioner
- Support from WAMHS
- Social and emotional support
- School nursing team
- Occupational therapy (via Hackney Ark)

Regular training days are held in school with foci that are identified from the school's development plan, namely inclusive practice. These may be held by the SENDCO, another member of the SLT with a particular expertise or a professional service that works with the school. If it is felt that there is a need which cannot be met by this group, then an external company would be secured.

Different members of staff have received training related to SEND, these have included:

- How to support children with speech and language difficulties.
- How to support children on the autistic spectrum.
- How to support children with behavioural, social and emotional needs.
- How to support children in literacy and numeracy.

Occasionally a pupil may need more expert support from outside of school such as educational psychology. Where this is the case, a referral will be made with your consent and forwarded to the most appropriate support agency. If

appropriate a pupil will undergo a number of assessments and support is usually provided to the school and parents/carers.

Expert services are accessed depending on the level and type of need, which can change on a regular basis.

- Educational Psychologist
- Speech and Language Therapy
- First Steps (CAMHS)
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Hackney Children's Social Care (MASH Team)
- Occupational Therapy
- Hackney Ark (sometimes referred to as MARS – Multi Agency Referral Service)
- Re-Engagement Unit (REU)
- PRU (Pupil Referral Unit)
- School Nurse
- School Doctor
- Inclusion Team
- Portage EYFS Team
- Specialist Teachers
- MHST (Mental Health Support Team)
- Family Support
- Family Coach Service

### Equipment and Facilities

The type of support, equipment and facilities needed to support children with SEND is led by the child's individual need. Children with an 'Education, Health Care Plan' will have an amount of time to be given as a minimum, to ensure that they are able to meet their targets. Their EHCP clearly lays out the type of support needed as a recommendation.

Other children will also receive support linked to their needs as indicated on their support plans.

This support may take various forms:

- In class support from teaching assistants
- Small group support
- Specialist 1:1 support
- Support from external agencies
- Provision of specialist resources

### Wellbeing, Regulation and Emotional Development

We embed social and emotional learning throughout the curriculum and prioritise wellbeing. Our support may include:

- Weekly check-ins with trusted adults
- Use of Zones of Regulation
- Circle of Friends or peer support
- Supported playtimes or structured breaks
- Nurture groups and key adult time
- PSPs (Pastoral Support Plans) where needed
- Referrals to therapeutic services (A Space, MHST)

We approach behaviour through a relational, not punitive lens—supporting emotional regulation, not compliance.

### Evaluation of Effective Provision

Provision for all pupils is observed during regular learning walks and through book looks. There is a focus on SEND on a regular basis and this is evaluated by the SLT. During Pupil Progress meetings, teachers are asked to discuss the effectiveness of interventions. Interventions are reviewed half termly by the adults supporting the children, the SENDCO and the SALT, assessments are also undertaken to show progress from entry points.

### Access and Participation

All children are encouraged and supported to participate in a wide range of activities, including trips, clubs, performances and enrichment. Where it is felt that a child with SEND may struggle to participate in a particular activity then adjustments are considered. This may be in the form of assistive technology, additional adult support, etc. This would be facilitated on a case by case basis. We strive to remove barriers, not limit participation.

### External Involvement

External support services play an important part in helping schools identify, assess and make provision for children with special educational needs. School maintains links with child health services, children's social care services and education welfare services to ensure that all relevant information is considered when making provision for our children with SEND

### Complaints and Concern

If you have concerns about your child's progress you should speak to your child's class teacher. If you have further questions or are not happy that the concerns are being managed and that your child is still not making progress, you should speak to the SENCO.

Formal complaints should be made to [governors@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk](mailto:governors@primaryadvantage.hackney.sch.uk)

The school follows Primary Advantage federation's complaints procedure, which is available here:

<https://primaryadvantage.co.uk/about-us/governance/primary-advantage-policies/>

### Contact details of support services for parents of pupils with SEND

Hackney Local Offer has information all all support services in Hackney:

<https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/home.page>

### Named contacts within the school for when young people or parents have concerns

If you wish to discuss your child's educational needs, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the class teacher or the SENDCO.

Other key people are:

LAB link member for SEND: Maria Newsome

Federation link governor for SEND: vacant

If you have any other questions, please contact the school on: 0207 254 1148

### The Local Offer

The Children and Families Act 2014 requires the publication of a local offer of all services available to support disabled children and children with SEND and their families. This easy to understand information will set out what is normally available in schools to help children with lower-level SEND as well as the options available to support families who need additional help to care for their child.

Hackney Education will allow the local offer to provide parents/carers with information about how to access services in their area, and what they can expect from those services. With regard to education, it will let parents/ carers and young people know how school and colleges will support them, and what they can expect across the local settings. The Local Offer Steering Group has developed questions for schools, and trialled them with a small number of settings.

You can find the local offer website here: [Hackney Local Offer](#)

There are 17 questions, devised in consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, which reflect their concerns and interests. These will be answered by agencies, schools and colleges to provide information to parents and carers to enable them to make decisions about how to best support their child's needs.

## Admission and Accessibility

We are a fully inclusive school. No child is refused a place on the grounds of SEND. We welcome children with EHCPs and will work with families and professionals to plan a smooth and successful transition.

If a pupil is transferring into the school with an EHCP or has been in receipt of extra support from LA centrally funded resources in their previous setting, continuation of this support will be negotiated with the appropriate member of the LA, to ensure that needs can be met.

We will take all steps possible to provide effective educational provision. Where a pupil has a particular need e.g. wheelchair access, the School and Governors will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for that pupil's need to be fully met.

As a school we are happy to discuss individual access requirements. Facilities we have at present include:

- Low level access to all school buildings.
- The school's accessibility policy (which can be requested via the school office)
- Transport can be organised to and from school by the Hackney Learning Trust via the following details: Phone 0208 558 4283, Fax 0208 8532 8926, email [transport@learningtrust.co.uk](mailto:transport@learningtrust.co.uk)

### Our school's accessibility plan

The school accessibility plan is updated at least every three years. You can find a copy on our website here: <https://www.st-matthias.hackney.sch.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/02/11.1-Accessibility-Plan.pdf>

## Appendix 1

### Useful Websites



<http://www.netmums.com/parenting-support/special-needs>

**contact** a family  
for families with disabled children

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk/>



Hackney Independent Forum for  
Parents/Carers of Children with Disabilities

<http://www.hiphackney.org.uk/>



Bringing Families Together  
OFFERING FRIENDSHIP & SUPPORT

<http://www.specialkidsintheuk.org>

**Scope**  
About disability

<http://www.scope.org.uk/support/families/parents-carers>



<http://www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/>



<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>



<http://www.nasen.org.uk/>



IPSEA  
Independent Parental Special Education Advice

<http://www.ipsea.org.uk/>



<https://www.homerton.nhs.uk/hackney-ark/>



Parents for Inclusion

<http://www.parentsforinclusion.org/>



<http://www.bibic.org.uk/>



(British Institute of Learning Difficulties) <http://www.bild.org.uk/>

all about people



<http://www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk/>

Taking Action • Changing Lives



<http://www.ican.org.uk/>



<https://www.gov.uk/children-with-special-educational-needs/statements>



<http://www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk/>