



Castlethorpe First School

SEND Information Report

2023-2024

The Village Schools Federation aspires to nurture and inspire every child to experience life in all its fullness. Our schools are rooted in inclusive Christian values to enable all to flourish by building knowledge, confidence and resilience for the future. We strive to be the best we can be. "Whatever we do, we work at it with all our heart"

Colossians 3:23

What kinds of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are provided for?

Children are identified as having SEND when they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children the same age or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of education facilities that are generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the local authority (SEND Regulations 2014).

At Castlethorpe First School, we provide support for many special education needs including, but not limited to:

- **Communication and interaction**, for example, autistic spectrum disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, speech and language difficulties
- **Cognition and learning**, for example, dyslexia, dyspraxia.
- **Social, emotional and mental health difficulties**, for example, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).
- **Sensory and/or physical needs**, for example, visual impairments, hearing impairments, processing difficulties, epilepsy.
- Moderate/severe/profound and multiple learning difficulties.

Special Education Provision is that which is additional to, or different from, that provision which is offered for most of the children.

Our school offers support and provision to children across all identified areas of need. We prepare to receive children with SEND transitioning into school and ensure that when required the teachers and support staff receive training to understand the special educational need, to be able to give the appropriate support.

How does our school identify children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

At the point of transition into the school we will always work closely with previous educational settings to ensure we continue to use successful strategies and approaches where a SEN has already been identified and we use information from the following sources:

- Home visits – Discussions with parents/carers.
- Pre-school and nursery visits, Pre-school and nursery Transition Reports, Primary school teacher's reports, phonics screening check, student data files.
- Application form and data information.
- Specialist colleagues and external agencies reports.
- Attend meetings with specialist teachers from the MK Inclusion team.

As you child gets older we use information or referrals from:

- Termly assessments and interim data.
- Teachers and support staff comments.
- Parental concerns.
- External agencies reports/referrals.

Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, all children are assessed against nationally set criteria to assess their progress against all areas of learning and development. It is through this process that children who are not making progress are identified by their teachers. Parents' and children's views and concerns are also taken into consideration. Teachers, teaching

assistants and parents play a vital role in raising concerns about other barriers to learning, such as behavioural, and social and emotional difficulties.

To establish that the child has a SEND, the school uses the Graduated Approach to assessing, identifying and providing for a pupil's special educational needs. The approach follows a model of assess, plan, do and review, which recognises that there is a continuum of SEND, and that it may be necessary for some pupils to have additional support to make progress in the form of an intervention, targeted provision and/or personalised provision. The teachers all understand the school's pathway for identifying SEND and work their way through, receiving the correct support at each stage.

If it is thought a family needs support we have:

- a good working relationship with outside agencies and a referral can be made to them based on the area of need.
- Use of the Early Help Assessment within school to identify and provide support for areas of need.

How does our school assess their needs?

A variety of assessment tools are adopted to assess a child's difficulties and determine the correct strategies/interventions to support them.

The following are regularly used in school:

- FACT (First Access Communication Tool) – used to determine speech and language difficulties.
- FACT+ - used to determine social communication and interaction difficulties.
- Referral to the Speech and Language department.
- Referral to School Nursing Team (Pathway to Community Paediatricians).
- Dyslexia checklist (Nessy on line).
- Boxall Profile

The SENCo is involved in some of these assessments and the results feed into the assess, plan, do and review cycle. External agencies may also become involved at this point and carry out their own alternative assessments.

How will you support and communicate with me to help my child?

Castlethorpe First School values parents/carers of children with SEND and appreciate the journey that many parents have been on prior to their child starting school. We will always endeavour to establish and maintain positive working relationships with the parents /carers, working in partnership to ensure each child can achieve their full potential. Parents hold key information contributing to the shared view of the child's needs and how to support them.

Castlethorpe First School will always encourage parents to play an active role in their child's education through:

- Attending induction evenings for children transitioning into school.
- Attending transition meetings for parents as children move into a new year group.
- Taking part in home visits by Foundation Stage staff in order to see children in their home environment.
- Parents being consulted when there is concern over a child and being made aware of additional support being put in place.
- Attending and participating in formal termly meetings to discuss progress.

- An open door policy for parents to provide additional information to school that may help their child.
- Class teachers providing informal updates.
- SEN support Plan Termly Reviews.
- Annual Education, Health Care Plan reviews.
- Parent mail to signpost support from other agencies.
- Staff email addresses can be used to communicate effectively with parent.
- Attend meetings with external agencies.
- Helping them to be organised for their day.
- Full attendance and good punctuality.

Our school will send one full school report which will show current levels, report on attitude to learning, behaviour and attendance figures. The teachers and SENCo will monitor and review your child's levels and identify where progress is not being made. This will allow intervention to be put into place.

What will the review process look like?

The class teacher is responsible for assessing and reviewing the progress of the pupils in relation to age related and national expectations. The children's progress is tracked from entry into school when starting Foundation Stage to Year 2, using a variety of methods (see Assessment Policy).

Pupil Progress review meetings are used to discuss the progress of children and the provision being put in place for those who are not making the expected progress. If the provision changes for a child the parents are informed and ways the parents can also support the child are discussed. If a child is on the SEND Register a Pupil Support Plan is put in place. Outcomes we would like to achieve are discussed with the parent/carer and pupil and provision put in place to achieve them. These are reviewed with the parents each term. Parents are asked to consider how they can work with school to support their child to achieve these outcomes.

Additional meetings also take place if external agencies/specialist teachers are involved in supporting the needs of a pupil. Parents are informed of any assessments taking place and are invited to be part of any reviews of provision that take place with other professionals. When a child is demonstrating a significant cause for concern or their learning needs are more complex and persistent than can be met by interventions, targeted and personalised support will be considered, then statutory assessment. The Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) incorporates all information about the child from birth to 25. All parties including health and other agencies involved with the child contribute to the plan. The school, in consultation with the child, parents and outside agencies will submit an application to the Local Authority.

How will my child be prepared and supported during transition?

Castlethorpe First School has developed excellent links with feeder nurseries and pre-school settings in addition to the Middle Schools within catchment, where most of the children continue their education.

Transferring into Castlethorpe First School:

- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) staff visit the children transferring from the Early Years settings and a handover meeting takes place between the professionals.

- The SENCo and EYFS teachers attend any meetings with regards to children with SEND and also observe the children in their present educational setting. Additional visits to the settings can be organised to establish early relationships.
- Communication takes place between the school and Early Years settings to ensure any relevant paperwork is passed on and contact made with any external agencies involved with a child.
- The class teacher and SENCo meet with the parents/carers of a child with SEND to establish a positive relationship.
- Additional visits for families can be arranged to familiarise the child with their new setting, prior to planned stay and play sessions.
- The SENCo will prepare an individualised Social Story for each child, to support their understanding of the transition ahead. This includes pictures of the environment and photographs of staff.

From Castlethorpe First School to a middle school setting:

- The children with SEND have an opportunity for a series of transition visits before their full transition day/s, which all the children attend, to give them more time to learn about their new environment.
- A handover meeting takes place between the Year 2 and Year 3 teachers.
- The SENCo from The Village Schools Federation meets with the new Year 3 team to discuss needs of the SEND children transitioning and aids with provision that needs to be put into place.
- Education and Health Care Plan reviews for Year 2 children are used as transition meetings and Middle School staff are invited to attend. This takes place in the Spring Term, with further meeting arranged as required.
- Arrangements are made with other settings as and when they occur.

Internal transition to the next year group:

- All the children across Castlethorpe First School participate in a transition programme during the Summer Term. This involves time with their new teacher and opportunities to spend time in their new environments.
- Additional opportunities to visit their new classroom are arranged for children with a SEND.
- A meeting takes place during the Summer Term and is attended by the present teacher, new teacher and parents, to ensure a detailed transfer of information.

How will my child be taught within the school?

The teachers at Castlethorpe First School have high expectations of all children and are responsible and accountable for the development of the pupils in their class, including those who have or may have SEND. All teachers will be told about your child's individual needs and will adapt their lessons to meet those requirements where necessary. Teachers have experience and/or are trained in doing this. This may involve using different strategies, more practical/adaptation of resources and activities, which means your child can access the lessons fully.

Within our school, there are a variety of staff roles, to help us fully support a child with SEN. Where it is felt it is the right thing to do, a child may be offered additional help and support, in which case you would be informed. There are a range of interventions and additional subject support which are available and should your child need this, it would be discussed with you.

Throughout their Primary phase (to Year 2), we will closely adhere to the national guidance to ensure appropriate access arrangements are in place where necessary for our pupils when completing any assessments throughout KS1.

Quality First Teach principles ensure high quality provision in the classroom:

- High expectations of the pupils.
- Excellent knowledge of prior learning.
- Adapted ways of learning, which may involve more practical learning strategies.
- Carefully planned lessons ensuring your child's needs are met.
- Pupils with individual needs will receive a personalised approach.
- Specific strategies (which may have been suggested by the SENCo or outside agencies) are put in place to support your child to learn.

Teaching assistants may be used to give additional support under the direction of the teacher. Where interventions are used to target specific gaps then the learning may take place outside of the classroom. These interventions are led by the teacher or experienced teaching assistants, who are skilled in running the intervention, monitoring and recording progress and giving feedback to the teacher.

How will the curriculum and school environment be matched to my child's needs?

Castlethorpe First School offers a great deal of history, with a unique, safe and accessible building and we do our best to create a welcoming environment to the whole community. The learning environments are carefully considered for pupils with SEND as we endeavour to be responsive to the needs of pupils as we welcome new families. We continue to consider and develop "Autism Spectrum Condition friendly classrooms" helping to reduce anxiety of our pupils with this SEND. The village school have been carefully adapted, allowing accessibility for wheelchair users and the school has a disabled toilet adapted to meet the individual needs of our children. Sensory and physical needs have been considered and a variety of resources sourced to support individual needs.

Additional support that is available for pupils with SEND:

- Foundation Stage have a teaching assistant in each class who can be directed to give targeted support or work on a group intervention.
- Experienced, trained teaching assistants are directed to give targeted or personalised support to individual children.
- Researched intervention programmes are delivered.
- Technology including an iPad and talking tins.
- When children with specific needs of specialist equipment join the school there is a multi-agency meeting to discuss their requirements and the relevant changes to the school building are carried out and equipment installed.
- Spaces within schools are often adapted, allowing for sensory needs to be met. This is unique to each school setting across the federation.
- Workstations are created according to need.
- The SENCo and staff work closely with outside agencies, who will advise on adaptations to the setting in order to meet individual need.
- On occasions, an Occupational Therapist (OT) may be required to assess the setting in order to advise adaptations based on the individual need.

An Accessibility Plan is in place and available on our school website.

What training has been provided for staff at our school?

Within the Village Schools Federation, we have a great deal of expertise amongst staff and their knowledge and skills are shared across the federation. Each child is central to what we do, and expertise is drawn upon, in order to meet need effectively. Staff within the VSF work collaboratively, sharing knowledge, strategies and expertise, supporting each other to deliver the highest quality provision for our children with SEN.

Our SENCo attends regular Cluster Meetings throughout the academic year, which enables the collaboration of SENCo's across Milton Keynes, to come together with healthcare professionals, to review and discuss SEND.

At Castlethorpe First School, we:

- have ensured that there is a member of staff who has completed the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within the Village Schools Federation.
- review staff training needs and provide relevant training to meet the needs of the children.
- have completed training in the following areas
 - o Protective behaviours
 - o Trauma and Attachment behaviours and strategies to deal with them
 - o Elklan – in-depth knowledge of children's speech, language and communication development
 - o Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) Level 2
 - o Autistic Spectrum Condition Awareness
 - o Writing social stories for children with ASC
 - o Writing comic scripts for children with ASC
 - o Signalong for non verbal communicators
 - o Rainbow Road
 - o Developmental Co-ordination problems
 - o Using activity breaks to support children
 - o Managing challenging behaviour
 - o Attachment training

The SENCo continues to develop strong links with other SENCo's within local schools, to share good practice and develop knowledge and skills.

The MK Inclusion Team also provide a comprehensive training programme for staff, covering a range of needs.

How can specialist expertise be accessed?

When a child is demonstrating further cause for concern or their learning needs are more complex than can be met by the school interventions, targeted and personalised provision, the school will engage with relevant external agencies. This is triggered when the pupil:

- continues not to make adequate progress.
- continues working at levels significantly below that of their peers even when teaching approaches have been targeted on an identified area of weakness.

- has emotional or behavioural difficulties which substantially or regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the other learners, despite taking part in an individualised behaviour management programme.
- has sensory or physical needs and requires regular advice and or visits from a specialist service or specialist equipment.
- has on-going communication and interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and causes substantial barriers to learning.

For these children the difference between their attainment and that of the other children is widening and needs further investigation. A request for external agencies to be involved follows a decision taken jointly by school staff in consultation with the parents. A SEN Support document will be completed with parents to enable us to track and monitor the APDR cycle. The SEN Support document will usually be supported by Specialist teacher input from the Local Authority (LA). Those visiting school will have access to the pupil's records to establish the strategies already tried and parental permission must be given.

We work closely with:

- the Local Authority specialist teaching team.
- health services – GPs, School Nurse, Speech and Language Therapists, Paediatricians, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Educational Psychologists, CAMHs and Milton Keynes Mental Health Support Team (MHST).
- Social services – social workers and the Safeguarding Teams.

How do we evaluate our practices within our school?

As professionals we continually review our practices within school. There are key times when the practices we employ are reviewed with other stakeholders.

These are:

- Termly review Personal Support Plan reviews of the effectiveness of the practices/provision which involves the parents.
- Reviews by external agencies (eg speech and language) on the progress of a child.
- Assessment data reviews by the senior leadership team. Termly meetings when the SEN Governor discusses provision and strategies used.
- All class teachers use their assessment data to inform their planning across the curriculum, this allows us to ensure that gaps are recognised and provision put into place to fill them. Subject leaders together with the senior leadership team carry out regular book looks, learning walks and meetings with teachers in order to continually monitor teaching and learning within the school.

How does the school ensure an inclusive environment for all?

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 we promote the positive health and well-being of each child in an inclusive environment by ensuring:

- all activities at lunchtime and after school are available to all the pupils.
- inclusion on school trips. In the unlikely event that it is considered unsafe for a child to participate in an offsite activity then alternative activities covering the same curriculum areas will be provided in our schools.

- SEND teaching assistants timetabled to give guidance and support during the social breaks of the day
- All activities within school are carefully considered for children with SEN and adaptations made accordingly, for example, availability to a sensory tent during Sports Day events.

How does the school support my child's wellbeing?

At Castlethorpe First School, we understand how important it is for the child with SEN to be listened to and to have an understanding of the processes going on to support their difficulties. We involve the child by:

- holding regular review meetings of their Pupil Support Plan (PSP) which they may attend.
- getting their views on the support they receive and the progress they feel they are making.
- establishing outcomes with them and the provision to achieve those outcomes.
- using the PSP as a working document so that they can see their progress.

The class teacher has responsibility for the well-being and pastoral care of the pupils in their class. If there is concern for the well-being of a pupil with SEND then the teacher may involve the SENCo in resolving the issue. A number of interventions are used in school to specifically cater for social communication and interaction difficulties pupils may have. All staff are responsible for pastoral care of children on their registers and work closely with and report to, the class teacher, SENCo and if necessary, the designated safeguarding team.

When a child is bereaved, we are able to offer support for our children and have strong links with Willen Hospice and Harry's Rainbow who support us with staff training and a range of resources helping children through the grieving process. We are also able to signpost to other bereavement services.

We as a federation also appreciate the journey that is taken for parents when their child presents with SEN and recognise families can often feel isolated. To support our families, we hold termly 'Coffee and Chat' sessions for parents/carers. In March 2023, The Government published the *Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Improvement Plan* and in response to this we ensure that our families feel listened to and supported throughout their journey with us.

What additional support is available for a child who is looked after by the Local Authority and has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities?

Other professionals involved can be:

- A social care team – who support the family and engage with the school
- The virtual school – who provide schools with information, tools to raise attainment and training

Additional financial support:

- Pupil Premium Plus - additional funds to help school meet the needs of a child

Who do I contact if I need further support or information about the provision for my child?

The class teacher has direct responsibility for the provision for your child and should be the first person contacted. An appointment can be made with the SENCo to discuss your child's provision. In the event of a parent wishing to complain about the provision for their child with SEND this is the procedure that should be followed. In the first instance the class teacher should be contacted, followed by the SENCo, then, if unresolved the Executive Head Teacher. In the case of an unresolved complaint the issue should be taken through the complaint's procedure. See The Village Schools Federation Complaints Policy.

Contact Details:

If you have concerns about your child

- please contact their class teacher in the first instance
- contact the Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) Mrs Adey Underwood who is available to discuss your concerns

Tel: 07716 638562

Email: senco@villageschoolsfederation.co.uk

• Local Authority Local Offer

All information regarding the Local Authority's 'Local Offer' can be found

at: <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/send-local-offer>