

Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School

SEND Information Report



September 2025

SEND INFORMATION REPORT

What is a Local Offer?

From September 2014, the Government has asked all Local Authorities (LAs) and schools in the UK to publish in one place, and keep under review, information about the services and provision they expect to be available for children and young people from 0 to 25 who have Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND). As part of this commitment, all schools are asked to offer details of their approach, resources and provision for children who may have an additional SEND need. This is known as the 'Local Offer'. For further information about the Local Authority's 'Local Offer', please visit the County Durham and Families website www.countydurhamfamilies.info

The purpose of the Local Offer is to give families choices and to support parents and families in understanding the range of services and provision available in the local area.

At Our Lady Star of the Sea Primary School, we are committed to the equal inclusion of all pupils in all aspects of school life. We understand and embrace the diverse and individual needs of all pupils and plan for the additional support required by those children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

We have a designated SEND Governor who works closely with the SENDCO to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of SEND provision at Our Lady Star of the Sea RC Primary. The purpose and aim of this information is to share our 'Local Offer' to children and families who have an interest in, or need additional SEND provision. If you require any additional information, please contact Mrs Wright (SENDCO) or Mrs Ashton (Head Teacher) and we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

What is SEND?

Special Educational Needs and/or a disability can affect many children throughout their school career and beyond. Whilst disabilities generally affect children long term, not all SEND difficulties should be seen as life-long. SEND in Our Lady Star of the Sea RC School is defined as any child requiring provision that is additional to or different from the rest of the class. For example, additional needs due to dyslexia, coordination problems (DCD), number understanding or sensory and/or physical needs. We value the fact that every child is unique and part of our school family and that a carefully planned approach is needed.

The four broad areas of SEND:

- o **Communication and interaction (SLCN, ASC)** This area of need includes children with Autism Spectrum Condition and those with Speech, Language or Communication Needs.
- o **Cognition and Learning (MLD, PMLD, SLD, SpLD)** This includes any children with Specific Learning Difficulties, Moderate Learning Difficulties, Severe Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties.
- o **Social, Emotional and Health Difficulties** This includes any pupils who have an emotional, social or mental health need that is affecting their ability to learn. o **Sensory and/or Physical Difficulties** This includes children with Hearing Impairment, Visual Impairment, Multi-sensory Impairment and physical difficulties.

Who decides if my child has a SEND?

At Our Lady Star of the Sea School, we pride ourselves in getting to know our children and families very well, many see us as 'one big happy family'. In this way, we understand that sometimes children join our school family with their parents having a detailed understanding of their child's specific needs. Alternatively, sometimes children join us and staff may initially be the people to identify an area of concern or specific needs for a child.

If this were the case, staff would liaise with the parents at the earliest opportunity to discuss such concerns and agree 'next steps'. For some concerns, we may discuss the involvement of specialist support, for example, Education Psychology, SENDIASS (support for families) or Occupational Therapy. It is important to understand that the involvement of professionals does not always occur in order to seek to 'label' or 'diagnose' children but to seek advice or strategies to help them to reach their full potential.

There are two categories of SEND at Our Lady Star of the Sea School:

A SEN Support Plan: the school oversees provision for children who meet this criterion. Together with parents, school initiates, reviews, amends and ceases support for children whose needs are seen at a 'SEN Support Plan' (school) level.

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP): An education, health and care (EHC) plan is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through

special educational needs support. EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs. Children at this level have their plans initiated and ceased by the Local Authority, but reviewed and monitored by the school and parents at least annually.

What involvement can we have as parents at Our Lady Star of the Sea School?

At Our Lady Star of the Sea RC School, we value the Home/ School partnerships that we have with our families. We understand the vital role that parental contribution has in the education and development of the 'whole child', both at school and home. We encourage our parents to take an active role in their child's education and welcome visits and discussions to share how your child is doing.

We also invite parents to attend meetings relating to their child's need and progress. These may be termly meetings to update Support Plans, meet with professionals involved and where relevant to attend Annual Review meetings for children with an EHCP.

How does my child contribute to SEND provision and planning?

At Our Lady Star of the Sea School all of our children are involved in their learning and about decisions that apply to them- we have respectful relationships based on trust and children have a voice that is listened to. During child centred reviews (for children EHCPs) your child is invited to contribute to the review and is encouraged, where possible, to share how their learning is going. Children who have support plans are encouraged to contribute, share and help to evaluate their own learning journey.

Will my child sit external tests, such as SAT's?

As all children are individual, the answer is very much dependent on the specific needs, provision and capability of each child. Most children do achieve well with specific, focused support and adaptations where required. If your child is able to access the Year 1 Phonic Screening Check, Year 2 SATs, or Year 6 SATs, they will be given planned and appropriate support in order to access these, often with access arrangements (such as extra time, a scribe, or enlarged texts). However, at times, some of our children are not able to access these assessments, due to very complex needs. In these cases, your child will not be expected to complete them and their achievements, outcomes and progress will be measured using school data tracking systems.

What about SEND and School Finances?

Each school in Durham receives its school budget in April, and as part of this budget there is a 'notional' SEN amount. As such, schools are responsible for funding the first £6k of support for children with SEN – after which they can request additional 'Top Up Funds' from the Local Authority; generally, this is for children with very high needs and often in receipt of a Statement or EHCP. In order to access these funds, the school produces a 'Costed Provision Map' – detailing the provision the child is receiving and at what cost to the school. Parents are involved in this process and are invited to review the plans and support timetables with our SENDCO.

Children in receipt of an EHCP may be allocated additional funds as part of the plan. The use of these funds is discussed at the initiation of the plan, and during the review meetings to ensure best value is achieved.

More information about SEND finances is available within the Local Authority Local Offer Website, a link to which is on our school website, under 'Local Offer'.

What kind of additional provision and curriculum could you offer?

The provision and curriculum experiences offered to SEND children within our school is unique and reflects the needs of each child. Our school prides itself in delivering high quality provision for all, reflecting our school Gospel values and allowing each child to 'let their light shine' and achieve success.

In order to deliver this provision, our school has:

- A model of early intervention for the needs of children with Speech, Language and/or Communication Needs. We pay for additional time from the speech and language team, in order to quickly intervene and assess any children who have difficulties at the earliest opportunity.
- High quality teaching support, to ensure children with additional needs are well supported in all lessons.
- A Catholic/Christian approach, where each child is treated as a unique individual and their needs are understood by all of the school community.
- A curriculum, tailored to the needs of the child with staffing, differentiation, teaching style, and resources.
- A dedicated SENCO fully committed to inclusion and high-quality experiences for all children.

Some examples of additional provision, which could be suitable for a child with SEND might include:

Some individual teaching/intervention, following specially designed programmes to address specific needs, e.g.

- Small group work to address shared issues, e.g. fine and gross motor skills groups; Lexia;
- Additional resources to enable better access to the curriculum, e.g. pencil grips, writing slopes, coloured overlays etc. Professional advice taken from Educational Psychology or the Cognition and Learning team.
- Thorough assessments undertaken by school staff or professionals
- Specialist interventions, e.g. Occupational Therapy, Sounds~Write, or Lego Therapy tailored to the unique needs of individual children.
- Skilled and dedicated Teaching Assistant support within the class, in order for the work to be further differentiated to meet exact/additional needs.

What additional pastoral support can you offer?

In order for children to achieve well, we have a strong focus upon pastoral care. Other than a dedicated Headteacher and SENDCO, experienced and skilled teaching and support staff we also have:

- **Transition:** We work closely with our Feeder Schools in order to ensure the smoothest transition possible. This includes our staff attending appointments with parents and visiting schools with children as a friendly face in their new environment. Transition is also closely supported within our school; EYFS to Key Stage 1, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and moving from year group to year group. If you feel that, you would like any additional support during a transition phase, please ask a member of staff.
- **Close links with External Partnerships;** In order to access the best professional advice, we also link with Local Authority and Private Providers of additional services, such as Occupational Therapy, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) School Nursing Service, Social Services and Medical Professionals. We are always happy and willing to facilitate meetings, including multi-professional meetings, here in school so that parents are in a familiar surroundings and are in a safe and comfortable environment to discuss the education and needs of their child.

How do you support children with SEND and vulnerable groups at Our Lady Star of the Sea School?

Children with additional needs, such as SEND or 'Looked After' Children are closely monitored and supported throughout their time at our school. Our SENCO regularly reviews the provision and achievements for our children with SEND to ensure the best outcomes for children and families. Working with our families is a specific part of this role and also the role of all staff at all levels; we see supporting children, through supporting their families and making them confident at each step of the way, as an essential part of providing quality provision.

At Our Lady Star of the Sea School, we regularly review children's academic progress and attainment, as well as the outcomes of all targets set on EHC Plans and SEN Support Plans. We also equally monitor how children achieve socially and emotionally to ensure that the needs of the 'whole child' are met.

How do you enable children with SEND to engage in activities with children without SEND?

At Our Lady Star of the Sea RC School, we do not see SEND as a barrier to learning or to accessing a broad, balanced curriculum alongside their peers. We pride ourselves on providing quality first support to ensure that all children can access tasks that are differentiated to their needs, and where possible as part of mainstream provision.

All school staff are well trained in supporting pupils with a range of complex needs.

Compliments and complaints

We work hard, in partnership with all families, to provide the very best opportunities for all of our children, understanding that we are all unique and different. It is always nice to hear your feedback about what is going well and if we can improve in any way, we would be happy to hear your suggestions. There is also a copy of the school's complaints procedure on the school's website should you feel you require it.

Main points of contact:

Headteacher: Mrs L. Ashton

SENDCO: Mrs C Taylor