

St Charles' School Governors' SEN report

St Charles' School aims to provide an excellent education for all children, irrespective of any additional (special) need or disability they have. We actively seek to improve our provision when we are introduced to an additional need that we have not previously had to consider. Children with additional needs are initially identified by class teachers who have firsthand understanding of how children in their class may find certain aspects of their learning more difficult to those of their peers. In dialogue with the SENCO, (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) teachers create an Individual Education Plan to address the needs of these children directly using additional adult support to help children overcome their difficulties.

The school has a 'Local Offer' which goes into far more detail about this, as does the SEN (Special Educational Needs) policy, both of which are available to read on the school website.

Children with an identified additional need receive targeted support from a member of the support staff team in addition to 1-1 help and as part of guided group with the class teacher. The impact of this is recorded on the IEP (Individual Education Plan) Monitoring Form which notes the small steps toward the evaluation of the IEP at the end of every half term. Additionally, children in receipt of an Education and Health Care Plan (EHC) have their provision formally reviewed every year and the Lancashire SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Officer for St Charles' School is invited to attend. Parental opinion is always sought and we strongly believe that parents, as the first educators of their children, should be able to advise us as about the priorities for their child's education.

From time to time, we need to adapt our teaching methods for some children with particular needs. This may include adaptations such as a sloping desk for a child with a visual impairment, a radio aid for a hearing impaired child or simply a step for a child with a physical disability. Children with specific learning needs are identified on teachers' planning and adaptations are made to include them in whole class teaching and, whilst giving them the additional support they may need, their dignity and self-esteem is of the highest priority.

Children who are behind national expectations when they join us are given extra help to 'close the gap'. Parents are given detailed guidance as to how they can help at home and we engage the help of our local Children's Centre and Early Intervention Support Officer for additional guidance. We plan a rigorous programme

of interventions that are specifically aimed to help children to make the small steps of learning so that they progress at a rate commensurate with their age and ability. For example, we have an experienced teacher who is training in 'Reading Recovery' to work alongside and guide our teaching assistants in their delivery of a 'Better Reading' Programme. Also, we have invested in IDL, (Indirect Dyslexia Learning) an online literacy support system, to support our older children who we have identified as 'at risk' from dyslexia screening tests.

Our Single Equalities Policy makes it clear that children with physical needs are included in all aspects of educational provision at a level that they are able to enjoy comfortably. Our PE Subject leader is keen to promote their enjoyment of physical activities and they enter a bespoke competition for children with similar challenges. Similarly, during sports day, our teams are carefully chosen to ensure that a child with a physical disability will be in a team with children who are particularly able at sport to keep their self-esteem as high as possible. As a catholic school, we seek to promote diversity and difference whilst also ensuring that our children and staff hold every member of our school family, child or adult, in the highest regard as each one of us is a child of God. Visitors to school tell us that we are good at this.

Sometimes, children have additional needs that are not readily identifiable. They may have emotional needs that are hard to articulate. Once we spot such needs, we aim to help the child quickly but sensitively. We have a member of staff who is skilled in counselling and, with parental consent, gently helps children to discuss their difficulties. Some children have difficulties in understanding social conventions and therefore acceptable behaviour. We have a member of staff who is highly skilled and experienced in helping children to overcome these difficulties and so we have very few instances of disappointing behaviour and a great track record in helping children and adults to understand what and how they need to change so that we continue to be a happy school family.

Our SEN Co-coordinator is our Head teacher, Mrs Baker. We prioritize the needs of all our children and this commitment is exemplified by our Head teacher also being a champion of all our children, including the vulnerable or disadvantaged. Our staff have access to specialist teachers and training so that no child should ever be left out because of lack of expertise. Mrs Baker, our SENCO, will source appropriate training where required. Our Educational Psychologist (EP) has an in depth knowledge of children in school that require her help and an excellent working relationship between our EP and our staff is beneficial to all our children. We work

closely with other organisations such as Parent Partnership and our local Children's Centre to support our most vulnerable families.

Parents are very important in helping us to know how best to support a child with Special Educational Needs. Every child with an IEP is invited to a review with the class teacher every half term to discuss parental wishes and ways to best support the child. Occasionally, we may get it wrong and parents may feel disgruntled. We encourage parents to come and speak to their child's teacher first but if that doesn't solve the problem, then Mrs Baker, our HT, will quickly make an appointment to discuss the problem. In the unlikely event that the problem isn't resolved, then parents can write to Mr Neil Yates, Chair of Governors, at the school address and the Complaints Policy will determine the next course of action.

Our Governors analyse all data relating to the progress of SEND children on an ongoing basis and rigorously challenge the HT if they believe this progress is not good to establish any additional barriers to learning.

We have a very good relationship with our local high school, St Augustine's, and transition from St Charles to St Augustine's is managed sensitively. An example of this would be a child with a hearing impairment would visit the high school in advance with a specialist teacher to ensure that the equipment used to help works properly in a different environment.

Lancashire County Council publish details of the help they offer, known as the 'local offer'. This can be accessed from:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities.aspx>

Neil Yates, Chair of Governors, October 2015