

THE ST. CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

Academy Trust - Special School

Mountdale Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 4AW

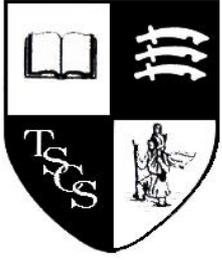
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Christopher's Cottage



A Residential Respite Care /
Sports Hall Facility

SEN Information Report

Types of Special Educational Needs that the School Caters for

1. At this moment in time (September 2016) The St. Christopher School Academy Trust is catering for 229 pupils. Our place number is 212 pupils and so we are considerably over-subscribed at this time.

The nature of the special educational needs we cater for varies each year, but the makeup of this year consists of:

122 Primary/nursery aged children of whom:

- 95 (78%) are affected by Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- 108 (88%) have some degree of learning difficulty (but not those pupils whose primary need is severe or complex and profound learning difficulties)
- 80 (66%) have moderate learning difficulties
- 9 pupils (7%) with ADHD and some pupils (15 – 12%) with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties who find concentration difficult and whose learning is affected by this.

The majority of pupils will have a combination of these difficulties rather than just one need or special educational need.

Secondary aged and 6th Form pupils have a recognised diagnosis of ASD or ADHD and usually some degree of learning difficulty which affects their ability to access the curriculum.

2. All Pupils should have their special educational needs identified, recognised and assessments completed and carried out before they enter the school. Sometimes special educational needs become apparent later due to the combination of difficulties. If there is a query as to the nature of a difficulty that requires further investigation then the school will contact parents/carers and other professionals as necessary to complete any further assessments required. The school purchases time from an Educational Psychology service and uses this when it feels there may be an unmet need that has developed. We are also in close contact with medical services and will refer to them if necessary. This can be especially relevant for mental health issues that often manifest during adolescence.
3. ALL our pupils have either a Statement of Special Educational Need or will be transferring to a converted Education Health Care Plan over the next 2 years. These set out clearly the nature of the provision needed for each pupil and how the school will meet this need.



SEN SPECIALIST
SCHOOLS



When considering the placement of a child into the school, full account of the provisions of the Education Health Care Plan will be reviewed as to whether the school believes they can meet the needs of the pupil and/or make reasonable adjustments to enable their needs to be met.

Evaluation Processes

4. The school evaluates its effectiveness in the meeting of needs through various means:
 - Progress of pupils' academic skills is measured in small percentile steps in all curriculum areas. We are continuing to use the National Curriculum levels as a baseline for the moment in time. We use the B-Squared system of recording the small steps which make up a level of the curriculum to assess and measure progress each term. We then use this information to measure progress against CASPA levels of progress to assess if a pupil is making expected, below or above expected progress against a national set of figures. This can be compared to similar children with similar levels of learning difficulty, similar pupils with ASD, gender, age of pupil, pupils with similar starting points, those who are in receipt of pupil premium and various groupings to test the effectiveness of the provision through the progress of pupils academically.
 - The school has created its own database system which tracks a number of aspects of progress of all pupils and allows us to investigate the effectiveness of all aspects of our provision. This allows us to investigate various groups and interventions to see if they are effective in helping pupils progress.
 - Parents' views of overall progress are sought regularly through discussion, Individual Support Plan views, formal reviews of progress at parents open evenings, review of progress discussions at annual review meetings, computer based views shared through the use of 'Tapestry'. Parents are able to give the information formally and informally and this covers the softer aspects of progress which are not always able to be measured in formal situations.
5. Ofsted inspects the school every 3 years to test the effectiveness of the provision and to see that pupils are being taught well to make the best possible outcomes for them. The latest inspection of the school was in March 2014 where ALL aspects of the provision were found to be 'Outstanding'.
http://www.thestchristopherschool.co.uk/images/pdf/ofsted_report_mar_2014.pdf
6. Southend Local Authority reviews the work of the school as it is a placing authority and through the use of the school support system evaluates its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the pupils on a yearly basis. It reports back to the school if it feels there are any concerns.
7. Governors of the school regularly review and receive reports from the school as to its effectiveness in meeting pupils' special educational needs. They also regularly visit the school and see for themselves how the school meets the needs of the pupils. They then report to the full Governing Body on the effectiveness of the provision.

The School's Approach to Teaching

8. The school's approach to teaching pupils with special education needs varies according to the needs of each group. We try to place pupils in the most appropriate teaching group to meet their particular special educational needs. This varies year on year according to the mixture of pupils within the school at that time. There is no prescribed teaching methodology, but all staff have to plan, deliver and assess all areas of the curriculum. There is a 3 year plan of topic coverage so that if a pupil stays in the same class for more than 1 year they will have a different learning experience the following year and not repeat the same topics. The curriculum is designed to offer a full coverage of all important aspects of development both academic, social and emotional in nature. The aim is to enable pupils to make as much progress as possible and to prepare them for the next stage of their education wherever this may be.

The curriculum is kept broad and balanced to enable all aspects of learning to take place. We make full use of the local environment, including outdoor learning activities. Primary aged pupils are able to make use of the specialist facilities, staffing and resources of the secondary department and so have access to a full sized sports hall, specialist cookery room, swimming pool, music and art facilities.

9. In the school year 2016/2017 there will be 11 nursery/early years, primary aged pupils groups.
- 4 Early Years Key Stage 1 classes, 1 of which is for those with early diagnosed needs associated with Autism and learning.
 - 7 Key Stage 2 classes of pupils with a mixture of Special Educational Needs. These pupils are grouped around their chronological age and abilities both academic and social
 - All primary class groups are 13 pupils or less according to the needs of the group.

10. In the secondary part of the school there are 6 Key Stage 3 teaching groups, and 5 Key Stage 4 teaching groups. It is not exclusively so. Groups are mixed year groups and mainly within their own key stage, but this can overlap according to the needs of the pupils.

There are 3 groups who spend more time with their group tutor and move between other staff for some of their lessons. Other groups move between a number of specialist teaching staff all day. There is also a specialist Key Stage 3/4 Autism resource base where pupils with severe ASD and learning difficulties are taught in specialist classes to suit their needs.

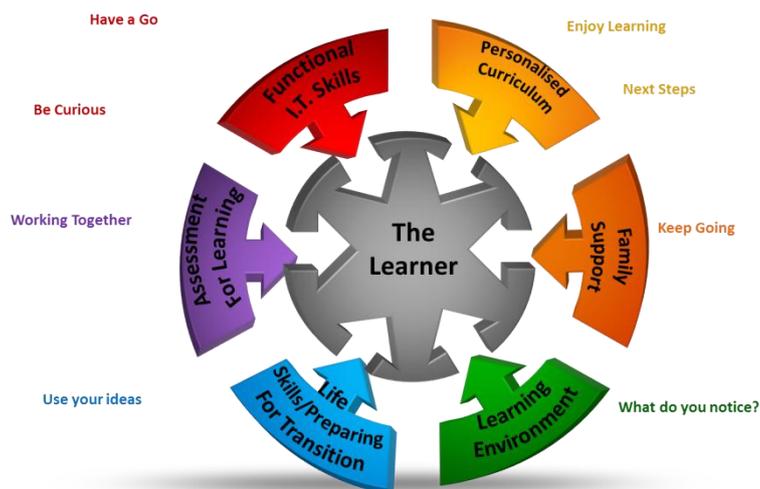
The secondary curriculum follows the national curriculum mostly, but is more practical in nature and broken into smaller steps. Pupils continue to focus on the development of good social and communication skills as their basic entitlement. Pupils in Key Stage 4 follow external examination courses at various levels according to their abilities and needs each year. Courses include BTEch, GCSE's, OCR Foundation and entry level courses and ASDAN qualifications in various subjects. We also make use of external provisions at a local practical skills site - Action Learning - which enables pupils to practice their knowledge and skills in an alternative environment.

If a pupil is able, willing and wishes to access local mainstream school provision for certain subjects, this is negotiated individually for the pupil(s) concerned with families and the pupil, and school concerned.

11. Our curriculum model sets out our principles of overall development for our pupils. Our vision for the school (jigsaw child) shows how we are concerned to develop the overall child in all aspects. There are a number of specialist teaching areas, these include:

- Full sized sports hall for PE lessons
- Specialist Cookery room where all groups are taught cookery and life skills in small groups – up to 6 pupils
- Specialist art / drama / design and technology / science and ICT suites and rooms
- Communication and Interaction Centre – a series of individual therapy type rooms, a multi-sensory room and occupational/physio room integrating sensory needs.
- Swimming pool – for use of small groups mostly primary aged
- Outdoor garden and BBQ area for growing vegetables and fruit for life skills

Curriculum Model



The Vision Statement
The visual jigsaw representation and vision statement came about as a result of all staff and Governors working together to create a picture and statement that we feel is pertinent to our work and school.



Additional Support from Within the School

12. **Speech and Language Therapists (SALTs)** - 4 SALTs work for the school providing individual, small group advice and support in the areas of developing language across all areas. The SALTs are funded from within the school's budget and are employed directly by the school to meet the needs of our pupils only.

It is envisaged that at least 70% of primary aged pupils and 45% of secondary aged pupils will access the specialist support of the SALTs in one form or another in the current school year (same as last year). SALTs also work very closely with all school staff, providing advice and support across all areas of communication. They also have various specialist areas of knowledge such as the development of feeding routines for those pupils who find eating a variety of food difficult, the use of augmented communication devices such as iPads using speech synthesis programmes, the use of PECS, colourful semantics and Makton signing – all according to need.

A specialist **Occupational Therapist** works 2 days a week for the school. She provides advice and support in paediatric OT and in sensory processing difficulties. She provides ideas, advice and support to other staff throughout the school.

Our **School Counsellor** works 3 days a week providing specialist counselling, advice and support to pupils referred by the pastoral team who need short term support in emotional and behavioural issues.

Our **Pastoral Team** comprises 3 members of staff who provide support on an individual basis for those pupils who need some time to discuss issues or additional support in lessons to remain on track and access the curriculum due to particular short term difficulties. The system for referral to additional support for emotional and social development is through this team of staff. All staff are aware of the need to support the emotional and social development of all pupils (see jigsaw pupil) and see it as a major part of our work. However, some pupils require additional specialist input at times.

Specific **reading support** - 2 teachers have additional qualifications and experience in dealing with specific reading difficulties such as dyslexia and provide advice, support and individual programmes as necessary. This is additional and different from the specific teaching and reading support available to all pupils.

Additional fitness and health monitoring is available from the school first aid person and the programmes for additional fitness from PE staff to help pupils overcome fitness and obesity issues.

Additional Support and Access to Outside Services

13. The school liaises very closely with the Emotional, Wellbeing & Mental Health team and supports a number of students and families who are having difficulties coping with their disability in the home situation. Joint behavioural and emotional programmes are worked on with families and all concerned.

Consultant Paediatrician, Dr. Perera, runs his ADHD monitoring clinic for pupils at this school under his care from the school. We facilitate medicals and monitoring of those pupils who are diagnosed with needs, helping to monitor the effects of any interventions.

We have regular contact with the Children and Disabilities Team of Social Care, based at The Lighthouse Centre and liaise with them regarding any issues where additional support is required or requested by families.

Respite care and after school clubs are run by the school. There is a regular programme of after school clubs that pupils can access and there is extended after school care 4 nights a week 3.00pm-7.00pm for families of pupils who require it. A programme of nights available is sent home to families at the beginning of each half term for booking of places. The school also facilitates the management of Christopher's Cottage, a specialist SEN 6 bed respite care unit on the school grounds. This is accessed via Social Care and children aged 5-19 who are given access to respite provision through Social Care can stay a variety of lengths of time according to their need and arrangements.

School holiday clubs are run every school holiday, except Christmas, 4 days a week. These are either sports activities in the Sports Hall (Chris Cross) or just for our pupils, SNAC club which is for those who need more intensive staff support (2:1). These are advertised and accessed via school letters and bookings forms.

Parent/carers support groups and courses are facilitated from the school and YOUNIFY is a parents support group which meets regularly to discuss issues and offer support.

Specialist Training and Expertise of Staff

14. There are a number of areas of specialist expertise amongst the school staff. All staff are encouraged and expected to take part in additional training each year. **All classroom based staff** take part in Team Teach training on positive interventions for behaviour management to safely diffuse situations and manage the behaviour of some very challenging pupils and situations. We also have 3 members of staff who are Team Teach trainers - they also train staff from other schools within Southend on a regular basis. Speech and Language Therapists hold specialist qualifications and continue to update their skills in accordance with their requirements. They are specifically trained in Intensive Interaction, PECS, Colourful Semantics, Makaton, and other techniques such as the use of the iPad.

The skills and expertise of the specialist in sensory difficulties Occupational Therapist was introduced to the school in September 2014. For 2 days a week our specialist OT works in the classroom and with staff devising programmes and giving advice on those pupils who would benefit from such interventions.

All teaching staff are encouraged to complete further advanced recognised qualifications in areas of special educational needs and are supported in doing so. These could be Masters Degrees in Autism, Dyslexia, Management, ADHD and behavioural interventions, counselling etc. according to interest and the needs of the school.

Other school staff are also encouraged to undertake specialist qualifications in a variety of areas, ranging from improving GCSE English and Maths grades, Open University Degrees, counselling qualifications, Makaton, play therapy, etc.

If there is an unmet need that we feel we could benefit from training in, then we will do our best to acquire it from outside sources if it felt to be essential to meeting the needs of the current pupils. We cannot meet the needs of all pupils with special educational needs within the area and do not feel it is right to try and do so. If there is a specialist medical need for trained nursing staff then this is not available at the school. We have first aid training and will administer oral medication or emergency medication that we are trained for, but we are unable to offer regular medical interventions that require specific medical personnel. We do not have the facilities or personnel for such a need.

Parents and Children Consultation and Communication

15. We hold a series of regular reviews of the work within the school to meet the special educational needs of each pupil. Parents are sent home an Individual Support Plan (previously Individual Educational Plan IEP) each term, which sets out the short term targets/outcomes for each child and emphasises the short term objectives. Parents/carers are invited to discuss this plan each term.

Pupils with severe communication difficulties have a daily home-school liaison book which allows school and home to communicate every day about everyday matters of significance and daily occurrences.

Annual reviews / meetings about progress are arranged regarding the outline of provision and need from the statement or EHCP. Parents/carers and children, where appropriate, are invited to attend the meetings. Reports and graphs of progress are discussed at the meeting as well as views as to the next steps in learning and longer term views as to possible routes for life after school.

Parent open days and evenings are held regularly. There is an open day for parents/families in the summer holidays which is open to all families, but is especially useful to families and children new to the school to enable them to get to know the layout of the school and be around school staff in the holidays.

Parent/family consultation evenings are held towards the end of October, beginning of November each year so that families can see how a child has settled into the new school year and the work completed since September can be seen. Parents/families are encouraged to contact the school via telephone or e-mail if there is a particular issue which needs to be discussed.

A detailed annual report of progress is sent home to every family during the summer holidays so that a full picture of the work of the year can be seen and the progress made.

Tapestry is an on-line, web based system which a number of groups are using to enable parents and families to see through annotated photographs and videos the work of the children in school. Parents can also upload photos and videos so that school staff can see the children in their environment outside of school.

Parents are asked to give their views about the work of the school via a yearly questionnaire. The results are published in the school. Parents views on Ofsted's web-site is also available for those who wish to pass on their views to Ofsted.

Pupils are also asked their views regularly. They complete work on their views of progress regularly including setting their own targets and reviewing them with staff in lessons, and in tutor time. There is an annual questionnaire to children which seeks their views and is published each year.

Secondary aged pupils complete a 1 to 1 tutor interview each term about their progress and views of the school. They also complete a pupil view sheet towards their annual review report. They have time to reflect and predict on their own progress for the year. There is a School Council which has representatives from each class and school house present to put forward school views to the management and governors and their views have been acted upon to change/improve facilities in the school.

Governors regularly review the work of the school and report back to the full Governing Body. Any complaints about the work of the school can be made in writing to the Chair of Governors who will respond accordingly in a timely manner. Our Complaints Policy can be viewed at:
http://www.thestchristopherschool.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/complaints_dec15.pdf

Transferring Between Phases in Education – Support for Families

- 16.** Pupils transferring into the school are supported by an initial home visit by school staff who meet the parent/carer and child if possible. This is to gather information about the child's likes/dislikes, concerns, worries, strengths and areas for development as well as to provide information about the school and initial practical details.

A social story/communication book is sent home to each new child which provides pictures and information about the school and the staff pupils will be working with.

A Family Open Day in the summer holidays allows families to visit the school informally to become familiar with the surroundings and their new classrooms. Once a child has started, a new parents open morning is held in the first half term to allow parents of new children a chance to ask further questions and get to know each other.

Information on movement between classes for the next academic year is sent home with the annual report together with the first names of the pupils in the class and photographs of the staff who will be working with the child. This allows the family and child to be prepared for changes for the following year.

Parents of pupils in year 5 are encouraged to start looking at possible placements for the future. Even if a pupil fits the criteria for remaining within the school we encourage all parents to visit possible alternatives so that they are fully informed of choices. This is discussed in detail at the year 5 annual review so that there is plenty of time to think about alternatives. This is especially important for the families of pupils who do not fulfil the criteria for remaining in this school and thus will need to move on to another placement at the end of year 6.

If a pupil is moving to another school/educational setting, careful transition work is completed with the pupil and the family. During year 6, pupils are accompanied by our school staff to visit the new provision, are supported in their first visits and then slowly the support from our staff is withdrawn to enable them to make the transition as smooth as possible. A leavers' assembly enables all pupils to know they are transitioning from 1 provision to another, even if they are remaining within this school. Those pupils who are remaining in this school spend time in transition into the secondary department having lessons with new staff and getting used to the new environment. Information about the pupils is given to the next setting, producing one page profiles of pupils as well as passing on further information on strategies that help and any further support that is needed.

- 17.** Further information about special educational provision is available from the Local Offer Page:
<http://www.southendinfopoint.org/kb5/southendonsea/fsd/localoffer.page>