



## **SEN INFORMATION REPORT ABOUT THE PROVISION AT ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL**

St Nicholas School is a large oversubscribed primary special school catering for children aged 4-11 years with a wide range of special needs. We make provision for students who have statements of education needs which include: Moderate Learning Difficulties, Complex Needs, Speech and Language Communication Disorders and Autism. Our aim is to provide daily learning experiences that enable our pupils to be equipped with the skills, resilience and life experience to become healthy, active and respectful learners. The school currently has 268 pupils on rolls, and all admissions are made by the Croydon SEN department.

### **ADMISSION TO ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL**

Usually admissions take place in September, however, occasionally pupils are admitted to the school at other times in the year if there are spaces available. All pupils attending St Nicholas are placed by the local authority, and require an Education, Health and Care Plan. The range of needs would be based primarily on cognitive ability, and includes the following categories:

- Pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties and moderate learning difficulties
- Pupils with moderate learning difficulties (globally delayed) accompanied by complex needs with would mean they would struggle in a mainstream school.
- Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who also have moderate learning difficulties or complex needs.

These are guidelines only to assist with consultation replies to the local authority about individual pupils. The local authority makes the final decision regarding placement.

Any placement should be discussed with your child's EHCP coordinator by contacting the local authority on 0208 726 6400. If your child already attends a school, you should discuss this with your school's SENCO. A change of placement would normally be discussed as part of the Annual Review Process.

Pupils are introduced to the school through an initial visit supported by adults familiar with them e.g. a parent, Teaching Assistant or SENCO. Reception children and their families have a range of transition events. These include a 'stay and play' where the pupil and their parents are invited into their new class to meet their class team. The pupils then attend a second transition event on their own where they are more familiar with the class team and classroom. The teacher also invites the parent into school so that information can be shared about the child. Reception children start at a later date than the other pupils; normally 2 weeks into the start of term.

### **HOW IS THE SCHOOL ORGANISED?**

The school has 28 classes. The school has 28 classes - 8 of these are pathway classes. The pathway classes cater for children with SLD, ASD and more complex needs. The pathway classes benefit from:

- between 8-10 children in a class and staffed with 1 teacher and 3 teaching Assistants,
- following an adapted curriculum that caters for an SLD and complex needs cohort,
- Pupils introduced to and following a 'TEACCH' style approach – working left to right, start and finish trays, use of visual/session timetable and structured and predictable routines,
- a higher level of support so that teachers can also plan individualised tasks that work on individual needs and areas that need further developing,
- regular movement breaks throughout the school day to encourage self-regulation skills,
- regular daily communication sessions run by teachers and TAs (following advice from the SaLT team) to enhance social skills, as well as functional skills such as sharing and turn taking,
- a focus on independent living skills as part of the curriculum.
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Our 'non-pathway' classes benefit from:

- between 8-10 children in a class and staffed with 1 teacher and 2 Teaching Assistants
- children follow an adapted EYFS curriculum in Reception and an adapted National Curriculum in Years 1-6
- Children are encouraged to work with some independence as well as in small groups with some opportunities for 1:1 work
- Every classroom follows a total communication approach such as visual timetables, Now and Next Boards, symbols, signing and AAC to facilitate learning.
- Children also have access to a TEACCH workstation
- Staff use Zones of Regulation with the children regularly and support children with their self-regulation
- Regular communication sessions run by Teachers and TAs (following advice from the SaLT team) to enhance social skills, as well as functional skills such as sharing and turn taking,
- a focus on independent living skills and social skills as part of the curriculum.

There are 12 classes in Key Stage 1 – 3 of which are pathway classes and 16 classes in Key Stage 2 – 5 of which are pathway classes. This academic year, the class set up is as follows:

Key Stage 1				
Pathway Classes				
Reception/Year 1	Year 1/Year 2		Year 2	
Non-Pathway Classes				
Reception	Reception	Reception	Reception/Year 1	Year 1
Year 1	Year 1/Year 2		Year 2	Year 2

Key Stage 2					
Pathway Classes					
Year 3	Year 4	Year 4	Year 5	Year 5/Year 6	
Non-pathway classes					
Year 3	Year 3	Year 3	Year 4	Year 4	Year 4
Year 5	Year 5	Year 5	Year 6	Year 6	

Specialist teaching is provided for Music and PE lessons.

#### WHAT SPECIAL FACILITIES DO WE HAVE?

The school has been in a new purpose-built building since April 2020. There are 28 classrooms with each pair of classrooms sharing an additional, adjoining quiet work room. Children in Reception, Year 1 and those in a pathway class benefit from a classroom with a shared outside area. The school also has a dedicated Music Room, PE Hall and Cooking/DT Room for Music, PE, Cooking and DT lessons. Older children in Key Stage 2 also use the MUGA for PE lessons. The PE Hall also has changing rooms.

In addition to the classrooms, the school also has the following: Sensory Room and Sensory Integration Room; a Learning Resource Centre for training and parent coffee mornings; a new library; Therapy Room; Role Play Room, Parent Room, Dining Hall and Soft Play.

The school also has additional outside space. This includes a dedicated playground for Reception age children and a new playground, MUGA and trim trail for the children in Years 1-6. We also have an outside learning area with a classroom space and a pond. There are also plans for a sensory garden. We also have a school field which is used in the summer months for PE and for sports day as well for whole school events.

#### HOW DO OUR PUPILS LEARN AND MAKE PROGRESS?

St Nicholas operates a curriculum which is developmentally appropriate for the range of pupils in the school, but encourages the development of pupil's independence and inclusion in the school community. Year groups follow the same topic theme but the approach is adapted in pathway classes so that children learn through TEACCH and sensory based activities. The curriculum aims to fulfil the requirements of the EYFS framework and the National Curriculum and meet individual needs identified on pupil's EHCPs through Pupil Passports, Individual Learning Plans and adapted teaching.

Through the curriculum, we try to ensure that children:

- Enjoy their education and achieve.
- Stay safe, and develop safe practices.
- Be healthy and understand about healthy lifestyles.

- Are able to make a positive contribution.
- Achieve economic wellbeing.

Lessons are planned well to take account of pupils' differing abilities. Objectives are not only achievable, but are also challenging and are monitored carefully to ensure all pupils realise their potential. Planning also ensures lessons include robust support for the development of pupil's reading, writing, communication, mathematics and social skills.

Pupils are provided with a menu of support throughout the week from a range of interventions and strategies in the classroom. Support is tailored to meet the needs of each child, but the aim is to promote as far as possible each child as an independent learner:

- Teaching through a whole class approach with tailored learning opportunities such as TEACCH and Attention Autism throughout the day supported by teaching assistants or teacher as required.
- Small group sessions to develop specific communications twice a week.
- Support from Speech and Language Therapists, usually as part of a consultative approach so that the classroom is communication friendly.

The Governing Board use a range of methods to evaluate the success of the education provided. This includes:

- Termly reports from the Head Teacher.
- Discussion and involvement in the school self-evaluation process.
- Regular monitoring visits to the school.

### **HOW IS MY CHILD'S PROGRESS RECORDED?**

Children are baselined within their first half term at the school using either the EYFS framework or the schools own Assessment. Assessment data is collected at the end of each half term and monitored by the Assessment Lead. The school's Assessment Framework and tracking sheets demonstrate the progress children have made through identifying if they have Encountered, Emerged, Developed or Secured at each Developmental Stage.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants also use the school's Effective Marking and Feedback Policy to record pupil progress and achievement in each lesson.

Evidence for Learning, an observation, assessment and reporting app, is used across the school. Photographic and video evidence captures pupils' experiences and allows teachers to monitor their development and share with parents. Evidence for Learning links with birth-5 matters and with the schools own Assessment framework.

Staff can also share achievements with parents via Weduc or phone calls home. Pupils achievements are also celebrated on Wow Boards in the classroom and through Star of the Week and House Point Assemblies.

Staff and parents/carers discuss Pupil Passports and progress made with short term targets in parents' evenings and agree new targets for the next term.

Parents/carers receive a school report at the end of the school year; this reflects progress made over the course of the school year.

## **THE EHCP ANNUAL REVIEW**

The EHCP is reviewed annually. During the review process, teachers will discuss progress made towards objectives set by discussing the strengths of the child as well as the barriers to learning.

Pupils in year 5 and Year 6 are reviewed in the Summer Term when transition to secondary school is discussed. Parents and professionals will discuss transition to secondary provision at the Year 5 annual review meeting. Recommendations will be made as to the type of provision for secondary education. Parents will be advised to visit secondary schools and consider appropriate options.

Reception pupils are reviewed in the Spring and Summer Term. The class teacher writes the EHCP review and paperwork is sent at least two weeks before the meeting. All professionals involved with your child are asked to submit written reports and, if possible, attend the meeting. Social workers for Children Looked After (CLA) are invited to attend.

Parental contribution is central to the whole review process. It is an opportunity for parents to suggest recommendations and comment on their child's progress towards identified outcomes. Progress targets set on the previous review is discussed. Consideration is given as to whether amendments to the EHCP are required, due to a change in needs of the child. The appropriateness of your child's placement may also be discussed. New targets are jointly planned and agreed between the class teacher and parent/carer.

## **WHAT IS OUR STAFFING EXPERTISE?**

An on-going programme of training and support is in place to ensure that all staff have appropriate skills and knowledge to support children with MLD, Autism, Downs Syndrome and Speech and Language needs using a range of teaching methods. All staff follow a rigorous induction programme in their first year and are supported by mentors.

Senior staff actively engage in a range of opportunities to share best practice and keep abreast of current local and national initiatives and policy to support children with SEN.

Staff are trained in the use of communication systems, for example: Makaton sign language, PECS, TEACCH, Attention Autism and use of visual cues to support development of pupil's communication skills. The school also seeks advice and guidance from advisors to review, evaluate and develop provision for students with complex needs. The school has its own Therapy Team consisting of a Band 8 Speech and Language Therapist, a Band 5 Speech and Language Therapist, a Speech and Therapist Assistant and Occupational Therapist. The NHS also provide a Speech and language Therapist and Speech and Language Assistant and Occupational Therapist and Assistant. An Educational Psychologist is also attached to the school from the Local Authority.

The school also buys in Play Therapy, Music Therapy and Drama Therapy. All staff members are trained in PROACT-SKIPr and the school has 2 Behaviour Leads.

## **WHAT IS OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS LIKE?**

St Nicholas School recognises that parents have a crucial role to play in their child's education and are well placed to have the best understanding of their needs. We recognise the importance of developing a partnership, which begins with the first contact with the school.

We aim to develop a good working relationship through effective communication systems, a parent support group and opportunities for discussion and feedback. These aims will be achieved through:

- Home/school contact through the Weduc (Reach to Parents) tool which provide the opportunity for daily feedback between home and school.
- Parents have access to the Evidence for Learning app where can they can see the progress their child is making.
- Timely contact by phone or email to deal with particular issues that may arise.
- Twice yearly parent consultation meetings with class teachers.
- Yearly Annual Reviews, as part of the statutory process. This also includes opportunities for parents to provide written feedback on an annual basis, usually following Annual Review.
- Family support and signposting through the school's Family Liaison Officer.
- An annual report at the end of the academic year.

Parent coffee mornings are organised giving opportunities for parents to socialise, to see how their child learns in school and to hear from a variety of speakers invited to address matters of particular interest. Parents and families are also invited to attend sports days, Christmas Shows and whole school events such as picnics or BBQs.

We have a dedicated Family Liaison Officer who is available to talk to parents about a range of issues which might be impacting on a pupil's attendance, engagement and/or other barriers to learning.

#### **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD MOVES FROM ST NICHOLAS TO SECONDARY SCHOOL?**

Pupils leave St Nicholas School at 11 years of age (end of Year 6). Transfer to their next placement is carefully planned to ensure a smooth transition. During the transition process, pupils are supported by staff familiar to them from St Nicholas.

Bensham Manor and Priory School are our main destination schools. Some children may transfer to mainstream secondary schools that have an ELP (Enhanced Learning Provision) attached. We have strong links to both schools and this includes visits from their staff to meet the year 6 pupils. Pupils will visit their new school in the summer term. Teachers from St Nicholas also meet with staff and other professionals to discuss pupils needs, behaviours and class placement.

Some children may transfer to a different provision earlier than year 6 e.g. to Red Gates or to a ELP attached to a mainstream school, if the school and parents feel the child's needs could be better met at an alternative school, following the annual review process. The children and their parents will be supported with transition.

#### **WHAT LINKS DO WE HAVE WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?**

St Nicholas serves the whole of the Croydon area and beyond. As part of an outreach arrangement with Croydon LA, St Nicholas aims to provide support using staff expertise and experience to enable mainstream schools to provide between support for their pupils with SEN.

The school is located in Purley and works closely with neighbouring schools including the South Croydon Learning Alliance. We are also part of the Specialist Learning Partnership which facilitates collaboration between schools so that they may share best practice to develop both curricula and pastoral systems for students with SEND. Work in the partnership includes:

- Models for assessment
- Moderation of students work
- Development of systems to track student development, both academic and pastoral
- Sharing best practice for curriculum design and content
- Comparisons of student progress across different settings and age ranges
- Sharing professional development opportunities such as training
- A forum for both subject and whole school development
- Review and inspection feedback

St Nicholas School strongly believes in creating an inclusive culture, which extends into the community as the links are a benefit to all.

#### **HOW DO WE SAFEGAURD THE PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL?**

St Nicholas School is committed to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, and as part of this operates a Child Protection Policy consistent with the Croydon Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. All staff employed by the school and members of the Governing board are vetted including checks made through the Disclosure and barring Service.