

Castlecroft Primary School

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Information for Parents - September 2021



Learning to use a kayak on our annual visit to Normandy, France

Introduction

At Castlecroft Primary school, enjoyment and achievement is at the heart of our aims for our children; and we aspire to support all children so that they have an enjoyable, stimulating and successful Primary education.

In order to do this, many steps are taken to support them achieve their best through their learning journey. Quality of teaching is vital; however for some children there are occasions when further additional support may be needed to help them achieve their targets and reach their full potential.

Our Inclusion Manager, Mr P Dimmock, working alongside the Head teacher and Governing Body, has responsibility for the strategic development of the SEND policy and provision. The Inclusion Manager has day-to-day responsibility for the operation of the SEND policy and the co-ordination of specific provision to be made to support individual children with SEND, including those with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. The Inclusion Manager provides professional guidance to colleagues and works closely with children, parents and other agencies to monitor pupils' progress and plan interventions where progress is slower than expected.

The purpose of this document is to inform all our parents of current SEN policies and practices and to answer any specific questions you may have regarding our provision for the education of children with special needs. First of all, we would like to provide you with some background information on two important government initiatives: Pupil Premium and The Children & Families Act.

Resource Base for the Education of the Visually Impaired



Learning to read braille



Working together

Castlecroft Primary School was opened in 1952 and is a combined Infant and Junior school with a Nursery class attached. The school operates under the LMS in liaison with Wolverhampton City Council. In 1978 a Resource Base for Visually Impaired children was established here in conjunction with its secondary phase equivalent at our neighbouring Smestow School. We have provision for the education of a limited number of partially sighted and registered blind children who are all fully integrated within the school.

The key principles of our VI provision are:

- The integration of VI pupils with their sighted peers in a mainstream setting
- The development of independent living skills
- A flexible system of staff management that provides an effective level of pupil support as well as opportunities for enhanced inter-personnel support, information sharing and in-service training
- A continuing review of technological support and development

Pupil Premium

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years. Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of service personnel. The Government believes that the Pupil Premium, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches pupils who need it most. In most cases the Pupil Premium is paid directly to schools, allocated to them for every pupil who receives free school meals. Schools decide how to use the funding, as they are the best placed to assess what their pupils need.

Schools are held accountable for the decisions they make through performance tables, which show the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers, and through the new OFSTED inspection framework, under which inspectors focus on the attainment of pupil groups, in particular those who attract the Pupil Premium.

The Children and Families Act 2013

The Children and Families Act takes forward the Coalition Government's commitment to improve services for vulnerable children and support strong families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The Act reforms the systems for adoption, looked after children, family justice and special educational needs.

The Government is transforming the system for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), including those who are disabled, so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them. The Act extends the SEN system from birth to 25, giving children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met.

It takes forward the reform programme set out in Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability: Progress and Next Steps by:

- Replacing statements and learning difficulty assessments with a new birth - to - 25 Education, Health and Care Plan;
- Improving co-operation between all the services that support children and their families and particularly requiring local authorities and health authorities to work together;
- Requiring local authorities to involve children, young people and parents in reviewing and developing provision for those with special educational needs and to publish a 'local offer' of support.

The local offer was first introduced in the Green paper (March 2011) as a local offer of all services available to support disabled children and children with SEN and their families. This easy to understand information will set out what is normally available in schools to help children with lower-level SEN as well as the options available to support families who need additional help to care for their children

The Wolverhampton framework allows the Local Offer to provide parents/carers with information about how to access services in their area, and what they can expect from those services. With regards to education, it lets parents/carers and young people know how schools and colleges will support them, and what they can expect across the local setting. The Local Offer Steering Group developed questions for schools, and trialled them in a number of settings

There are 14 questions, devised in consultation with parent/carers and other agencies, which reflect their concerns and interests. These are answered by agencies, schools and colleges to provide information to parents and carers to enable them to make decisions about how to best support their child's needs.

Below are Castlecroft Primary School's responses to these questions.



We like to encourage success and achievement in all areas of life

1. How does Castlecroft Primary school know if children need extra help?

The **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25** years states that ‘A pupil has SEN where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age.’

At Castlecroft, we aim to offer excellence and choice to all our children, whatever their ability or needs. We have high expectations of all our children. We aim to achieve this through the removal of barriers to learning and participation. We want all our children to feel that they are a valued part of our school community. Through appropriate curricular provision, we respect the fact that children:

- have different educational and behavioural needs and aspirations;
- require different strategies for learning;
- acquire, assimilate and communicate information at different rates;
- need a range of different teaching approaches and experiences.

Many of the children who join us have already been in early education. In many cases, children join us with their needs already assessed. All children are assessed when they enter our school, so that we can build upon their prior learning. We use this information to provide starting points for the development of an appropriate curriculum for all our children. Children continue to be assessed as they progress through the school.

If our assessments show that a child may have a learning difficulty, parents/carers will be contacted to discuss concerns and to enlist their active help and participation.

Children who join us from other schools are supported using information obtained from their previous school. We then use this information to ensure they are placed in appropriate groups.

We also know when pupils need help if concerns are raised by parents/carers. Sometimes concerns are also raised by teachers and teaching assistants, based on lack of progress, changes in progress or pupil’s behaviour. If, as a parent/carer, you have concerns then the first person to contact is your child’s teacher. If you have further concerns then contact Mr Dimmock, the Inclusion Manager.

2. How will I know how Castlecroft Primary School supports my child?

Each pupil's education programme will be planned by the class teacher. It will be differentiated accordingly to suit the pupil's individual's needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or higher level teaching assistant or teaching assistant in class.

If a pupil has needs related to more specific areas of education, such as spelling, handwriting, numeracy and literacy skills etc. then the pupil will be placed in a small focus group. The length of time of the intervention will vary according to the need of the individual child. The interventions will be regularly reviewed by all involved to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning. If you have any queries relating to the interventions please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or Inclusion Manager.

Occasionally a pupil may need more expert support from an outside agency such as the Speech and Language Therapy Service, Occupational Therapy Service or Sensory Inclusion Service. Here a referral will be made, with your consent, and forwarded to the most appropriate agency. After a series of assessments, a programme of support is usually provided to the school and parent/carer.

The Governors of Castlecroft Primary School are responsible for entrusting a named person, Mr A Dyll (Head Teacher) to monitor safeguarding and Child protection procedures. He is also responsible for the monitoring and correct administration of the Disclosure and Barring services procedure and the School's Single Central Record.

In a support and challenge role the Governors ensure that the school is as inclusive as possible and treats all children and staff in an equitable way. They monitor and review the accessibility plan and all other statutory policies as defined by the DfE.

Using technology to support learning



3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

When a pupil has been identified with special educational needs their work will be differentiated by the class teacher to enable them to access the curriculum more easily.

Teaching assistants will be allocated to work with the pupils in a 1-1 or small focus group to target more specific needs.

If a child has been identified as having a special educational need or disability, they may be given a support plan which has individual learning targets set for them according to their area of need. Pupils will be involved in this process and are given the opportunity to discuss their progress. These will be monitored by the class teacher on a regular basis and by the Inclusion Manager three times a year, or once a term. These individual learning targets will be shared with parents/carers and a copy will be given to them.

Where appropriate and reasonable, specialist equipment may be given to the pupils e.g. writing slopes, concentration cushions, pens/pencil grips or easy-to-use scissors.

For information regarding the school curriculum please visit the school website for fuller information. The school website also provides information about Literacy and Numeracy that Parents/carers may use to support their child.

4. How will I know how well my child is doing?

At Castlecroft we work closely with parents and carers in the support of children with special educational needs and we encourage an active partnership through on-going dialogue. Please contact us early when you are concerned and do not let your feelings or concerns build. Early intervention in SEND is vital and a parent's intuition is vital in helping us to diagnose issues and help individuals.

You will be able to discuss your child's progress at meetings each term to share the progress of SEND children. Your child's class teacher will be available at the end of the school day to book an appointment if required or a phone message may be left at the school office requesting an appointment if you wish to raise a concern. Mr Dimmock (Inclusion Manager) will also meet with you to speak in more detail about your child. Appointments can be made by visiting or phoning the school office.

The class teacher may suggest ways of how you can support your child's learning such as extra reading or homework. Mr Dimmock, our Inclusion Manager, will also meet with you to discuss how to support your child. The class teacher may also meet with you to discuss how to support your child with strategies to use if there are additional difficulties with a child's behaviour or emotional needs.

Sometimes, outside agencies or Educational Psychologists (EP) are involved and their reports, suggestions and programmes of support will be provided for use at home.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

The school offers a variety of pastoral support for pupils who are encountering emotional difficulties. These include:

- Members of staff such as the class teacher, key stage co-ordinator, teaching assistants and Inclusion Manager are readily available for pupils who wish to discuss issues and concerns. Where appropriate, mediation sessions are carried out.
- Individuals who need social and emotional support at lunchtime may also be supported by a Teaching Assistant.
- Access to weekly private counselling sessions run by Insight Counselling.
- We also run a lot of after-school clubs and activities which, for those pupils who are struggling in their academic work, offers an opportunity to shine in other ways through Art, Music, Drama and Sport.

Pupils with Medical Needs

If a child has a medical need then a detailed Care Plan is compiled with support from the school nurse in consultation with parents/carers. These are discussed with all members of staff who are involved with the pupil.

Our members of staff also receive Epipen, Asthma and Anaphylaxis training delivered by the school nurse on an annual basis.

Paediatric First Aid trained and First Aid at Work trained staff work in every phase of the school.

Where necessary and in agreement with parents/carers medicines (where the medication is a matter of routine for the child's wellbeing) are administered in school but only where it is prescribed, is required to be taken 4 times a day and there is a signed medical consent form in place to ensure the safety of both the child and the member of staff.

Pupils who are Looked After by the Local Authority

Our Inclusion Manager is also our Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (LAC) and is therefore able to maintain an overview of the needs and progress of this more vulnerable group of children. All of our Looked After Children have their own Personal Education Plan (PEP) with detailed programmes of support tailored to their specific circumstances. These are reviewed every term through PEP meetings in school with contribution from carer, teacher and child. Our Designated Teacher also tries to attend the separate termly LAC meetings which take place out of school, usually at the carer's home address.

Bullying and Anti-Bullying

Bullying is an important issue in schools and one to which SEND and looked after children may be particularly susceptible. At Castlecroft Primary School we are committed to providing a warm, caring and safe environment for all our children so that they can learn and play in a relaxed and secure environment.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in our school. We take all incidents of bullying seriously. Bullying hurts. No-one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect while they are at our school and pupils who are bullying others need to learn different ways of behaving.

At Castlecroft Primary School we acknowledge that bullying does happen from time to time – indeed, it would be unrealistic to claim that it does not. When bullying does occur, everyone should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively in accordance with our anti-bullying policy. We are a TELLING school. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a member of the school staff.

Our Anti-Bullying Policy contains much more detail about this issue and is available either as a printed paper copy or from a link on our school web-site.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?



Experiencing the rain on our new playground

At times it may be necessary to consult with outside agencies to receive their specialised expertise. These agencies include:

- Attendance Advisory Practitioner (Educational Welfare Officer) – Jane Pendrous
- Autism Outreach Team at Tettenhall Wood School – Helen Wood
- CAMHS (Child & Adult Mental Health Service) – based at the Gem Centre
- Child Protection Social Workers – based at Bingley School
- Children and Family service - based at the Gem Centre
- Children’s Therapy Services: these include Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy, which are all based at the Gem Centre
- Early Years Special Needs Team – Jane Harvey
- Educational Psychologist – Dr Emily Strong
- INSIGHT Counselling Service – Nick Speirs
- MENTOR LINK Services – Elaine Southall
- Paediatricians - based at the Gem Centre
- Pennfields Outreach Service – Eve Griffiths
- Penn Hall Outreach Service for physical disability – Kate Rogers
- SEN Specialist Teacher – our school’s designated Specialist Teacher is Vicki Walsh
- Sensory Inclusion Service for children with Hearing/Visual Impairment – Rob Tipton
- School Nurse Team – Kam Dhillon
- Wolverhampton Information Advice and Support Service – Elaine Westwood

An Educational Psychologist (EP) would normally only work directly with pupils whose needs are felt to be quite considerable and have not responded well to interventions previously put

in place for them. The EP will offer advice to the school and parent/carers on how best to support the children in order to take their learning forward.

7. What training have the staff who are supporting children with SEND had or are having?

Sometimes we ask our own staff to disseminate information and strategies from the courses they have attended; sometimes we invite outside agencies to share their expertise with our staff; and sometimes we work with the parents of our own pupils so that they can share with our staff from a real family perspective. This is just a small sample of some of the training we have undertaken over the last few years in school:

- How to support pupils with Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
- How to support pupils with Dyspraxia and Dyslexia
- How to support pupils on the autistic spectrum
- How to support pupils with speech and language difficulties (ELKLAN)
- How to support pupils using MAKATON
- How to support pupils with Attachment Disorder
- How to support pupils in crisis - Team Teach training
- How to support pupils with basic skills in Literacy and Numeracy – Precision Teaching

This year we are introducing training in the skills of Emotion Coaching for all staff and parents

The Inclusion Manager is updated through Network meetings and information shared with staff during staff meetings. Teaching staff have on-going in-house coaching to create Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-honoured (SMART) targets.

8. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?



Nursery children having fun at Kingswood Trust, Albrighton

Educational Visits are available to all. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable all children to participate. However, if it is deemed that an intensive level of 1:1 support is required a parent/carer may be asked to accompany their child using this visit.

If the special need is for example behavioural and there is a significant risk of harm or danger posed by an out of school activity (where the risk would be difficult or impossible to manage) the Head teacher / Governors can decide that the child does not attend that trip. This would be extremely rare, if not unheard of, as most behaviours can be mitigated and the risk assessed and managed.



*Rock climbing and high ropes
on our visit to France*



9. How accessible is the school environment?

As a school we are happy to discuss individual access requirements. Facilities we have at present are:

- Ramps into school to make the main building accessible to all
- Designated disabled toilets available for pupils in the Infants and Junior departments
- Colour contrasting surfaces on steps
- Wide door access is available in most parts of the buildings
- Lift which provides access from Key Stage 1 department down to Key Stage 2

- An Infant Playground with quiet grasses areas, Buddy Benches and a Reading Corner

***Reading together at playtime
on the Infant Playground***



Any reasonable, specific additional needs which cannot be generally expected can be catered for on request. The school will make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a range of disabilities. This is true of pupils, parent / carers and the wider school community.

10. How will the school prepare and support my child when joining Castlecroft Primary School or transferring to a new school?



Playing with friends in our wooded playground area

Many strategies are in place to enable the pupil's transition to be as smooth as possible. These include:

- Discussions between the previous or receiving schools/phases prior to the pupil joining/leaving.

- Transition visits are arranged for pupils who need time in their new school.
- The Headteacher and the Inclusion Manager are always eager to meet parent/carers prior to their child joining the school.
- Secondary school staff visit pupils prior to them joining their new school. We also liaise with secondary schools to pass on information regarding SEND pupils.

Where a pupil may have more specialised needs, a separate meeting may be arranged with the Castlecroft Inclusion Manager, the secondary school SENDCO and parents/carers and, where appropriate, the pupil. Appropriate documents held by Castlecroft will be exchanged at this time or forwarded to the new secondary school. Traditionally, most of our pupils transfer to our neighbour, Smestow School, but we also have good links with other secondary schools within our locality, including Highfields, St Edmund's and The Girl's High School.

11. How are resources allocated and matched to children's Special Educational Needs?

The SEN budget is allocated each financial year. The money is used to provide additional support or resources dependant on an individual's needs. The additional provision may be allocated after discussion with the class teacher at pupil progress meetings or if a concern has been raised by them at another point in the year. Resources may include deployment of staff depending on individual circumstances.

12. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

These decisions are made in consultations with the class teacher, key stage co-ordinator, Inclusion Manager and, when appropriate, members of the Senior Leadership Team. Staffing matters have to be agreed by Governors. Decisions are based on the tracking of pupil progress and as a result of assessment by outside agencies. During their school life, if further concerns are identified due to the lack of progress or well-being then other interventions might be arranged or required.

13. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

All parents are encouraged to contribute and take an active role in their child's education. This may be through:

- Discussions with the class teacher,
- During parents evening or consultation meetings,
- During discussions with our Inclusion Manager and/or other professionals.

14. Who will I contact for further information or if I am dissatisfied?

If you wish to discuss your child's Special Educational Need or Disability further or want to speak first to your child's class teacher, then if not satisfied with the information given or action that is to be taken to the Inclusion Manager and then to the Headteacher. If you have a complaint please follow the separate complaint procedure on the website.

The school can be contacted on 01902 556606

Head Teacher: Mr A Dyll.

Designated Child Protection Lead (DCPL): Mr A Dyll Deputy DCPL: Mrs S Birbeck-Simpson

Inclusion Manager: Mr P Dimmock.

Designated Teacher for Looked After Children: Mr P Dimmock.

Chair of Governors: Mr K Rogers.

Governor for SEND: Mrs A Haffie-Hobday.