**Shaftesbury Abbey Primary**

Church of England Voluntary Aided School

**Caring, Confidence, Community, Creativity**

**SEND Information Report 2025**

**Introduction**

Welcome to our SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) information report which is part of the Dorset Local Offer for children and young people with SEND. It is the responsibility of the governing body to publish information about its policy for pupils with SEND but we are committed to working together with all members of our school community to share this information. We welcome any response to, and involvement in, this process. The people to contact about this are:

Sally Howard – SENDCo

Margaret Derrett – SEND Governor

If you have any concerns specifically about your child please speak to their class teacher or to Mrs Howard (showard@shaftesburyabbey.dorset.sch.uk)

**How do you know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child might have Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND)?**

At Abbey School children may be identified as having additional needs in a number of different ways. You, as their parents and carers, are the people who know them best and we will always encourage you to share any concerns with us. The class teacher, teaching assistant (TA), Head teacher and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) are all there to listen. There is also a governor of the school with special responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We will also use the following to identify children who may need extra help:

- Information shared by pre-schools or previous schools

- Information shared by other professionals e.g. a doctor or Speech and Language Therapist

- Concerns raised by teachers or teaching assistants in relation to class learning, or identified through the Head teacher or SENDCo reviewing pupils' progress in learning

- Concerns raised by staff in school about social and emotional well-being e.g. a child finding it hard to get on with friends or feeling anxious or angry.

We always want to know if you have any concerns, however small they might seem, and will share our concerns with you. It is by working together that we can offer the best support possible for your child.

**How will staff support my child?**

Each class teacher is responsible for planning appropriate learning for the children in their class; learning that engages them, challenges them and helps them reach their full potential. Each class also has a teacher assistant, or teaching assistants, supporting this learning, and the TA will work with your child in class as part of a small group, or individually, on a daily basis. A TA may also work with your child outside of the classroom on specific skills they need extra help with e.g. on speech and language skills or fine motor skills, such as handwriting.

We currently have a special class, ‘The Nest’ which has been set up to meet the needs of children who require specialist provision, identified in their EHCPs. This again has a teacher and teaching assistants who plan a specialised curriculum for the children. The room is resourced to support this curriculum.

The SENDCo maintains an overview of the support in place and meets with teachers on a regular basis to discuss children needing extra support and to review the effectiveness of this support. This will be measured in terms of the progress your child makes in learning, but also in terms of your child's emotional well-being. We want children to be happy in their learning. The SENDCo meets regularly with the SEND governor and provides reports to the full governing body evaluating how effective support is in ensuring children reach their full potential.

The SENDCo helps teachers plan support work for your child. In some situations the SENDCo may also work with your child, carrying out assessments of need, or specific activities to support your child's learning. Sometimes, after discussion with you, advice from specialists outside school might be sought e.g. from Speech and Language Therapists. You will have links with the class teacher, teaching assistant and SENDCo who will keep you informed about what support is in place for your child and how this is helping them.

**How will the curriculum be matched to my child’s needs?**

All work in class is carefully planned to meet the needs of individual children. Generally a lesson will have learning activities aimed at three different levels of ability; this is known as differentiated learning. Otherwise learning will be scaffolded in different ways to support children to meet the learning outcome. However, if your child's needs would not be met by these activities then an activity supporting the same learning aims would be planned specifically for them. If your child's teacher felt that an additional support programme would help your child make even better progress then this would be planned with the SENDCo.

The aim is that all children access learning across all subjects, make the best possible progress and have their achievements recognised and celebrated.

**How will both you and I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child’s learning?**

We will stay in regular contact with you via face to face conversations, email or telephone; whichever is most convenient for you. Sometimes a home-school book may be kept to share information to and from school. We are always available during the school week for you to make contact with and to share your feelings as to how your child is getting on at school.

The progress of all children is monitored by the class teacher (ongoing), and by the Senior Leadership Team as part of a review cycle. The SENDCo also monitors the progress of children with additional needs to make sure that the support they receive is effective in helping them. The SENDCo talks with the class teacher and any teaching assistants delivering support programmes on a regular basis to review targets. All children with additional needs have a plan outlining the outcomes they are working towards and the support they receive to help them achieve these. These plans are agreed in discussion with the child, teacher and SENDCo. Your child's plan will be shared with you.

We are able to give you activities to do at home to support your child's learning and to assist by discussing out of school activities that might help your child. If relevant, you will be included in training arranged for staff to support your child and we can share information about other organisations that might be able to offer training or support. We also welcome you sharing information with us.

**What support will there be for my child’s overall well-being?**

At Abbey School we recognise that happy, confident children are the best learners and your child's happiness and well-being are of utmost concern to us. Our staff is a warm and caring team which works to make sure your child feels secure and valued. Class teachers and TAs are there to talk to, if you, or your child, have any concerns. We also have an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) who is trained specifically to support children's well-being and who is able to work with children who are suffering a period of anxiety, sadness or anger. We will work to make adaptations to support your child, in discussion with you and them. Our aim is that children feel empowered to discuss what they feel might help and that we plan solutions together. Feeling in control of a situation can help children to manage their feelings more confidently.

All children are valued for their contribution to school life and their achievements are celebrated in class and as a whole school. We recognise that children may shine in different ways and are keen to recognise all achievements both in and out of school.

We work with parents to increase attendance and staff have undertaken positive behaviour management training.

Our staff have basic first aid training and several members have higher level paediatric first aid training. Members of staff have also received additional training in administering medicines, such as Epi-pens and inhalers.

The SENDCo is trained in facilitating Person Centred Reviews for children with additional needs, ensuring that your child is able to contribute their ideas fully to plans to support their learning in school.

**What training do staff supporting children with SEND have and what specialist services and expertise can be accessed by the school?**

The SENDCo has a postgraduate diploma in SEND. All staff have received training in a range of SEND, including how to make their classrooms and lessons accessible to all children. Our TAs have developed specialisms in different areas of SEND, including working with children with Hearing Impairment, Autistic Spectrum Conditions, ADHD, Downs Syndrome and supporting speech and language and motor skills development. They are used to support groups and individuals across the whole school. We have a specialist TA trained as an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant.

We have well established links with a range of other professionals including:

- Mental Health Support Team

- Social Care services

- Outreach from Special Schools

- Hearing Support Services

- Speech and Language Therapy services

- Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

- Occupational therapy/ Physiotherapy

- Schools' Paediatrician and Schools' Nurse

- Educational Psychology

- TADSS (Teaching Alliance of Dorset Special Schools)

- Early Help

**What training do staff supporting children with SEND have?**

Training is ongoing to keep up with developments in SEND. The SENDCo attends briefings for local SENDCos, as well as more specific training, and provides updates to staff.

Staff attend training courses and outside professionals are invited into school to provide training in their own specialist fields. Our staff have had training in supporting children with Autistic Spectrum Conditions, Downs Syndrome, Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, hearing loss, speech and language difficulties, gross and fine motor difficulties, behavioural difficulties and medical conditions such as Diabetes, Epilepsy, Anaphylaxis and feeding issues.

We also recognise that with a new child starting we may need to access further training specific to their needs. We have well established links with education and health professionals to enable us to do this. If your child required this kind of input we would aim to include you in planning and attending this training. Parents are invaluable in sharing their expertise in these situations.

**How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom, including trips out?**

At Abbey School, all children are included in all aspects of the curriculum, and all children have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as clubs. There are many different clubs offered by staff at lunchtime and after school, aiming to allow children to develop existing interests, explore new challenges and maintain their mental well-being.

All children also have the opportunity to take part in school trips and residential visits. If your child has specific needs we will take these into account when planning activities. We have links with health professionals and experts at the local authority who have helped us plan for children with additional needs going on residential visits. A risk assessment is always completed prior to any trip. This will identify any areas which may need more specific planning for your child. Should the risk assessment indicate for any reason that a particular activity would be unsafe for your child's needs, then an alternative activity meeting the same learning aims would be planned. Your views would be sought throughout the planning process.

**How accessible is the environment?**

Our site is limited by its geographical position on the hillside at the edge of Shaftesbury. However, we aim to be as accessible as possible within these constraints.

All our classrooms are calm, welcoming places which incorporate aids such as visual timetables for those on the Autistic Spectrum and colour adjusted screens for whiteboards and computers for those with Dyslexia. There is also sensory support available in all of the rooms such as fidget toys, wobble cushions and resistance bands.

We have two disabled parking spaces and disabled access toilet with facilities for washing and changing. The whole building has been surveyed and alterations made to ensure the environment is suitable for those with hearing impairment. We have also built up a wide range of specialist equipment and resources to support children with additional needs.

We have 'The Den', a special room set up for working with children needing help with anger, anxiety, grief or low confidence. It is designed to provide a sanctuary with relaxing chairs, soothing lights and special toys and books. We also make use of quiet spaces for children to retreat to if they need time out from a situation, including a quiet room specifically for the Reception class.

‘The Hive’ provides another welcoming space for children who find the transition into school in the mornings tricky. The children are able to have a calm start to the day, in a smaller group with additional adults, allowing time to talk about their feelings, enjoy breakfast and develop confidence and self-esteem.

We have been able to establish links to help us communicate effectively with parents and carers whose first language is not English.

**How will you prepare and support my child moving to the next stage of education and how will you build their independence?**

Over a number of years we have been able to develop links with a range of secondary schools that our children move on to, including schools with specialist SEND provision. We plan for transition to a new school early, allowing time for school staff from both schools to meet with parents and children. This means questions can be asked, and answered, early on so there is no uncertainty and anxiety about a move.

With the help of the secondary school, we aim to identify specific skills that will be needed in the new school and then work to build these before the transition. Skills might include organisation of belongings, reading and following timetables and locating different classrooms for different lessons. We also identify strategies that the secondary school will use and start to use the same strategies, so they will be familiar to your child when they start their new school.

In addition to planning meetings between staff, parents and children, we also engage with extra visits to a new school. Often there may be a series of these, aiming to build familiarity with a new school. Initially you as a parent may visit with your child, but then your child might have several additional visits. The ultimate aim is that everyone involved can feel confident about the move.

**How are the school’s resources allocated and matched to children’s special educational needs?**

Resources are allocated dependent on need. Our greatest resource is our team of experienced teachers and teaching assistants who work with children on a small group or individual basis, targeting specific areas of need. In addition, children may benefit from special resources to support their needs, such as reading support schemes or writing aids or sensory supports. We are constantly looking to build on the resources we are able to offer.

Careful assessment of children with additional needs identifies the resources which would be of most benefit in supporting them. These are provided from the schools' existing bank of specialist resources or, if a new idea or resource is identified, may be purchased from a budget set aside for this purpose.

**How is the decision made about how much and what type of support my child will receive?**

The decision about the type and amount of support your child needs is made by staff working with them, the SENDCo and external professionals involved - in discussion with you as parents and carers. This is reviewed regularly to make sure it is effective. Sometimes a child's needs are such that support will be ongoing; in other cases we hope that support will mean a child catches up with their peer group and no longer requires extra input.

A child identified as having SEND will, after discussions with parents, be placed on the school's SEND register. A child on this register will have a plan outlining outcomes as steps to help them reach their full potential, and the additional support needed to meet these. The outcomes will be specific and measurable, and there will be a time scale set for achieving them. You, and where appropriate your child, will be involved in setting and reviewing these outcomes in the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review recommended by the SEND Code of Practice.

If your child has complex and long term needs they may have, or need, an Education Health Care Plan agreed by the local authority. If this is something your child needs we will work with you to gather all the information needed, and make an application.

**How can I be involved?**

We are a team; children, parents, professionals and school staff working together. You will be involved in discussing what your child needs to reach their full potential at school. You will also be involved in sharing knowledge of difficulties, and in gathering evidence of how effective support for your child has been. We encourage contact; be it popping in at the end of the day for a chat with the class teacher, or an email to the SENDCo. We want to know any concerns you have so we can work together to address them. Equally, we want to know when things are going well. If a strategy works well for you at home, it may equally well be effective in school.

Your role in supporting your child at home remains vital. Sometimes this might be with extra activities provided by school, such as homework or practice for specific skills. At other times this might be developing areas of strength and confidence for your child. We are always keen to celebrate successes for your child both outside of school as well as inside. Working together, staff, parents and children, we will 'be the best we can be' – our school motto.