



**St Matthias**  
ACADEMY



# **St Matthias Academy**

## **SEND information report 2023**

**We will provide a learning environment that empowers, challenges and encourages individual success and social responsibility.**

St Matthias Academy actively promotes the principles of equality and inclusion for all its students.

**Date: September 2023**  
**Review Date: September 2024**

## **Introduction**

St Matthias Academy is a specialist academy for pupils who have been unable to remain in their mainstream provider. We are part of Midsomer Norton academy trust which is a large trust across the south west.

St Matthias academy consists of three schools based at Fishponds, Rush Hill and Brentry. The academies accept pupils from Key Stages 3 to 4. As an inclusive provider we cater for a range of needs and abilities including: social, emotional and mental health needs, moderate learning difficulties, pupils with speech language and communication needs and pupils on the autistic spectrum. Therefore, we have a duty in relation to identifying and supporting all pupils with special educational needs whether or not they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

There are four categories of need identified in the Special Needs Code of Practice 2015.

These are:

- Cognition and Learning;
- Social Emotional and Mental Health;
- Communication and Interaction;
- Sensory and Physical.

Pupils with identified SEN are taught alongside their peers with access to adaptive teaching approaches. They will access a range of additional support strategies and resources and teaching specific to their needs.

Pupils may require targeted interventions in addition to support within the classroom.

## **As an Academy we:**

- Aim for all young people have access to good or outstanding teaching
- Provide an inclusive, adaptive curriculum in order to meet the needs of the learners at St Matthias Academy
- Monitor the progress of the young people and identify, plan for and deliver any additional support the young people may need
- Provide personalised learning, which may include using additional providers, bespoke timetables and use of specialist advice
- Work closely with multi-agencies in order to be able to support the young people as best we can

### **Who can I speak to if I think my child has special educational needs?**

If you feel your child may need some extra support at St Matthias, please talk to their tutor. Alternatively, you can arrange to speak to the SENDCo directly to discuss their needs. We strive to have an open and honest relationships with our parents and would hope that you feel confident in talking to us about the support you feel your child needs.

The SENDCo is responsible for:

- Managing the support for the young people with SEND and/or disabilities at St Matthias Academy. The SENDCo will ensure that pupil's SEND needs are met.
- Co-ordinating all the support for young people with special educational needs (SEN) and or disabilities.
- Developing the Academy's SEND Policy to make sure all children get a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs in school.
- Ensuring that the Academy Council is kept up to date about issues relating to SEND.
- Following a graduated response appropriate to the needs of the individual.
- Overseeing the annual review and ECHP processes.

### **How can I support my child at home?**

We welcome any opportunity to work collaboratively with parents/carers and are always happy to share strategies and resources that support your child. Tutors make regular contact home and invite you to be involved in the target setting for your child as well as discussions around next steps for your child. We are happy to meet with parents throughout the year. If your child is diagnosed with SEN needs, the SENDCo will speak to you about how you can help supporting the needs at home.

### **How will I know if my child is making progress?**

Teachers regularly assess children's progress; this information is sent out biannually in reports. If your child's teacher or tutor is concerned about their progress, they will contact you to discuss these concerns. Tutors will feedback progress at least every 6 weeks and review the targets set in the Bristol SEN support plan termly. For those pupils who have an EHCP, this document is reviewed at least every year at an annual review meeting where parent/carer, pupil and any relevant professional will be invited to the meeting to discuss progress and review targets. Should they be unable to attend, we will do everything we can to include their views in the final draft of the review.

Some children may have multi-agency meetings where many different staff from a variety of outside agencies meet to discuss progress and decide the best ways to support. You will always be informed and invited to these meetings as your views and ideas are vital to building a clear picture of the child. If parents/carers feel they would like support from outside school, they will be directed to the Supportive Parents support line on 0117 989 7725, please see agencies section of the school website for further information.

### **How does the school know if a child may need extra help?**

When children are first attending St Matthias, they are given time to settle in and complete baseline assessments across subject areas as well as a reading assessment. Information about learning needs is acquired from these baseline assessments, conversations with the child, the family and previous school's records, if available. If Special Educational Needs are indicated, the school undertakes some in-house assessments before developing a SEN support plan to address those needs.

At St Matthias, staff undertake regular training to develop their skills at identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. Due to smaller class sizes and a high ratio of staff to pupils, identification of needs can occur through observation, assessing and recording of both pupils academic and behavioural progress and needs.

All teachers and support staff are responsible for identifying pupils with SEN and, in collaboration with the Special Education Coordinator (SENDCo), will ensure that those pupils requiring different or additional support are identified at an early stage.

This process is done in collaboration with the parents/carers. St Matthias recognises the unique insight that parents/carers have into their child's needs and are encouraged to discuss the needs of their child with their tutor or SENDCo.

Pupils and young people with special educational needs often have a unique knowledge of their barriers to learning and what support they require. They will be encouraged to participate in designing their SEN support plan and be actively involved with target setting and provision decisions.

### **How will my child be supported as when they move to St Matthias?**

At St Matthias Academy, we endeavour to ensure transitions between schools are given due consideration and care to ensure that our pupils feel emotionally prepared for the changes ahead of them. Supported transitions may be offered in line with the child's need.

- An induction meeting occurs the week prior to starting at the school to introduce the school's processes and procedures. This offers a space for questions to be asked and concerns to be raised. Parent and carers are given an admissions pack and encouraged to look on the school website to support them in enabling their child to settle into school routines.

- For children with identified or unconfirmed SEND, the SENDCo may also meet with parents/carers to allow concerns to be raised and solutions to any perceived challenges to be established
- The previous school will be contacted and records will be requested.
- If the child is moving on, visits to the new provision will be arranged and a transition programme devised in line with the child's needs.

### **How will you help my child who has SEN?**

St Matthias strives to deliver an education which meets the needs of every learner through adaptive teaching strategies to ensure inclusive practices.

This includes:

- use of adaptive teaching strategies
- deployment of extra staff to work with the pupil
- provision of adaptive learning materials/special equipment
- provision of targeted 1:1 or group interventions
- staff development/training to undertake more effective strategies and knowledge of conditions.
- access to LA support services for advice on strategies, equipment or staff training
- access to speech and language therapist, educational psychologist, primary mental health worker, school nurse or other indicated professional
- implementing programmes supplied by other agencies e.g. the speech and language therapist (SALT), occupational therapist (OT) or for more complex cases, the Educational Psychologist.

### **How will we know if the support that's been put in place is working?**

We utilise data related to academic, social, emotional and wellbeing outcomes. The school will consider the views of teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, carers and pupils.

Effective provision would be evidenced through:

- progress in all areas of learning, self-esteem and social, emotional and mental health levels through Boxall
- pupils meeting their identified personal targets
- feedback from pupils, parents, staff, governors, LA and OfSTED inspections;
- recognising and valuing all forms of achievement including personal development and well-being.

### **What support will there be for my child's wellbeing?**

Each tutor team provides pastoral care during morning registration every day and following lunch time. At St Matthias all staff are SEMH specialists and trained in nurture and trauma-based approaches. We have a team of teachers, learning mentors and support staff who provide social and emotional support and work on development of specific areas with the young people.

The timetable includes RSHE lessons, art wellbeing sessions, enrichment activities and focused nurture and wellbeing mentor sessions which aims to develop students' skills and knowledge including; self-care, self-regulation techniques, emotional literacy, communication skills and building relationships.

The Academy has access to a wide range of professionals and can make referrals to other agencies in liaison with home.

### **Bristol's SEND Local Offer**

The SEND Local Offer is a resource which is designed to support children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families. It describes the services and provision that are available both to those families in Bristol that have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who do not have a plan, but still experience some form of special educational need. The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education, health and social care, as well as those provided by the private, voluntary and community sectors. This can be accessed at <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-local-offer/parents-and-carers>

### **SEND Academy Councillor**

The SEND Academy Councillor is responsible for:

- Making sure that the Academy has an up to date SEND policy.
- Making sure that the Academy has appropriate provision and has made necessary adaptations to meet the needs of all young people in the Academy.
- Understanding and monitoring the support given to young people with SEND in the Academy.
- Reporting to the full Academy Council

### **What do I do if I would like to make a complaint?**

Please see the St Matthias website for further details.

We must by law offer you the following stages to resolve your complaint:

Stage 1 – provide an opportunity for you to resolve your complaint informally, for example by discussing the issue with a senior member of staff.

Stage 2 - If you are still not happy, we should accept a written formal complaint from you, which will normally be responded to by the Head Teacher or Chair of the Academy Council.

Stage 3 - If you remain dissatisfied, we should organise a hearing with a panel made up of at least 3 people not involved in the complaint, one of whom must be independent of the management and running of the Academy.

If you are still unhappy then your final option is to refer your complaint to the Education Funding Agency, but they will only look at complaints that have followed all 3 stages detailed above.

### **Key Staff**

Alun Williams, CEO

Eileen Flynn, Chair of the Academy Council

Eileen Flynn, Academy Council Representative for SEND

Aileen Morrison, Head Teacher

Simon Quinn, Deputy Head Teacher

Dominique De-luliis, Deputy Head Teacher

Julie Caswell, Assistant Head teacher and SENDCo

Simon Kershaw, Assistant Head Teacher

Sarah Jones, Assistant Head Teacher

Hannah Grant, SENDCo