



SEND report to Governors – June 2023

SENDCO – Anna Christensen

Overview

We are seeing an increase in special educational needs at St Alban's. We are finding that we have larger numbers of children who are struggling with their social, emotional and mental health in particular. We have seen a rise in cases of Emotional-Based School Avoidance which can manifest as difficulty getting children to come into school and then difficulty keeping them in class if they do. I have worked closely with Colette Haig to identify which of our Persistent Absentees are SEND and looked at what we are doing to support them. We meet weekly to go through the attendance data and look at what support might need to be looked at. We have had some successes with a couple of families but there are still some we are working on.

We currently have 84 children identified as having SEN. The code of practice identifies 4 broad areas of need; cognition and learning, communication and interaction, social, emotional and mental health and physical needs. Here is the breakdown of SEN at St Alban's:

	Number of children with this as primary need
Cognition and Learning	25
Communication and Interaction	24
Social, emotional and mental health	32
Physical needs	3

Children with SEND are continuing to be supported through quality first teaching, with adaptations being made to meet their individual needs. We do have some children moving on to specialist provision in September (FF, HL, P-MH and possibly SL and OC). These children have EHCPs (education, health care plans) and have been given a place at schools that can better meet their needs.

I have made (or reviewed) 20 applications for an EHCP assessment to the Local Authority. They have had a record number of applications recently and are unable to keep up because they don't have enough Educational Psychologists to do the assessments. We have used an independent Educational Psychologist (Beth Sheldrake) to help move some of these along.

We have 6 EHCPs in place and a further 4 are at the draft stage. I have also applied for Individual Pupil Funding Agreements for 5 children who are needing lots of extra support at the moment. I'm still waiting to hear if these have been approved. Louise and I are having SEND transition meetings this half term with the Secondary School SENDCOs.

Assessments

Staff work closely with the SENDCO to raise any concerns they have about the children they teach. We then work closely with them, and the child's parents to plan the best form of support. Support plans are reviewed termly and where necessary, assessments such as BPVS (gives a general IQ level) and DST (dyslexia screening test) have been carried out to inform the planning of support. We have had Angela Lynch in from SENAAT to conduct some more in-depth assessments.

Speech and Language

We continue to buy in extra NHS Speech Therapy support. We have a new Therapist, Jennifer Murphy who comes into school every other Tuesday. The children under SALT are reviewed in school and programmes are assigned where appropriate. These programmes are delivered by TAs in short focused sessions.

Paediatric referrals and ADHD/ASC pathways

We continue to see an increase in referrals for ADHD and Autism. This could be due to the circumstances and parents spending more time with their children at home during COVID. It may be due to an improved awareness of how difficulties can present themselves. We have had an increase in parents wanting referrals for their children when this isn't necessarily appropriate. This is particularly difficult and time consuming. Haig continues to support parents who have behavioural concerns and signposts them to appropriate support and advice.

The waiting time continues to be extremely long and parents often wait over 18 months for a Paediatrician appointment. We signpost parents who need support in the meantime to ADDvanced Solutions Wirral who run parent groups etc but these services seem to be particularly stretched at the moment. We have also referred families to the 0-19 service to help with sleep problems and continence issues.

Outreach Services

We have 4 children receiving support from Orrets Meadow Outreach. This consists of weekly specialist teaching from one of their teachers and follow up sessions with a TA from school who has been trained in how to deliver the program.

We have continued to seek advice from the outreach service from Elleray Park Special School to support children with significant learning needs in F2 and Year 1. I have referred 5 children to Amanda Roberts at the ASC team and have had meetings to provide strategies and support for those children. I am also asking her to come in to advise F2 staff on transition to Year 1.

We have also had support from Beth Clark at Gilbrook Outreach for two children (this was through a referral to the Integrated Response Pathway).

SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) support

We continue to have lots of extra support for SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) within school.

REST EASY - a whole school strategy aimed at helping children to regulate their feelings and recognise when they might need some help with this. Emily Gearing who developed the REST EASY method comes into school every Tuesday to support the pastoral team and also to support 7 children with 1:1 sessions.

JC Wellbeing – Jimmy Cross from JC Wellbeing has been in every week to support staff who are teaching children displaying challenging behaviour. He completes observations and then provides plans with appropriate strategies. He has also led staff training about what help he can provide and supported staff with general advice around SEMH.

Play Therapist – this specialist support for our looked after children/those with attachment/trauma difficulties is up and running for 4 children. It is going well and the children are gaining a great deal from it.

Sensory Room – we now have a designated Sensory Room which is used by children as needed throughout the day. I have also sorted a ‘sensory wall’ for KS2 and KS1.

Provision Map

We have introduced a new software which helps to monitor the support that SEN children receive. The teachers have used it to create their support plans which set out what support they receive in class. The feedback from parents so far has been good. This new resource will help me to keep an eye on provision across the school better.

Nurture plans

As we have seen an increase in needs we know we will have to make some changes to our provision moving forward. We have met with Alison Grimshaw from Nurture UK who talked us through what her service can offer in order to help us set up two Nurture Bases (one for KS1 and one for KS2). I set up the Learning Hub between the two Year 6 classrooms as a Nurture inspired space and it is now called the Cherry Blossom Room. It is currently being used by individual children and small groups of children who are not coping in class as and when it is needed. I am working with Jimmy Cross to come up with a plan to use it more regularly as a base in the last few weeks of the summer term with a view to being up and running in September. I am going to have some training and there is also whole school training booked in for September.

Yvonne Sutton – SEND audit

Yvonne came into school and conducted an audit of the SEND here at St Alban's. I have used her observations and suggestions to inform my new action SEND plan.

In summary the main points for action are:

- Review the SEND register and associated lists and develop a robust pathway to establish why and when a child should be identified as needing to be monitored, receive additional support or be identified as having SEN. Create a flow chart on 'The Graduated Approach at St Alban's' to share with all staff.
- Update format of SEND Support Plans to include one page profile information and termly targets all in one document. Staff training around setting SMART targets and collaborating with children and parents.
- Purchase and set up TES Provision Map to help set clear entry/exit criteria for support/interventions with planned timescales.
- Input relevant information to capture intervention/provision through whole school.
- Develop the use of this whole school system to:
 - ✓ Provide a whole school overview of provision in 4 broad areas of need
 - ✓ distinguish the waves of support/intervention within each area of need
 - ✓ illustrate where there are any gaps in provision
 - ✓ show the children/year groups accessing the provisions
 - ✓ Outline system that shows which assessments are used for which children and when.
- Implement and lead an Inclusion Team who oversees all SEN/SEMH concerns.
- SENCO and SEN Link Governor (Cath Moore) to meet in Summer Term to discuss the impact of the Graduated Approach.
- To monitor how teachers are adapting the curriculum for SEND learners. To offer support and advice but also to empower curriculum leads to offer support to teachers across subject areas
- To recognise and facilitate sharing of best practice through classroom observations.

Anna Christensen
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