



**St Catherine's
School & College**
*Specialists in Speech, Language and
Communication Needs*

SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS INFORMATION REPORT MARCH 2023

Current Ofsted Gradings

Education: Good – July 2018

Care: Outstanding – March 2023

School Context

St Catherine's is a national charity which is approved by the Department for Education to run a non-maintained residential and day special school for the education of students between the ages of 7 and 19 years who have speech, language and communication needs. Some students also have associated conditions such as autistic spectrum conditions, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

23% of our students board at the school on a weekly basis and come from a wide range of local authorities. 77% of our students come from the Isle of Wight and are day students. Almost all students are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.

Standard Admissions Number

There is no standard number of students the school can take. Currently we have 92 students.

The Admission Process

This involves three stages.

Stage 1 – Review of documentation

Prior to visiting, we ask parents/carers (or their local authority, at parents/carers request) to submit their son/daughter's documentation for review by our assessment team. Documentation should comprise of an Education, Health and Care Plan together with the most recent reports (Educational Psychology, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and School Annual Review as appropriate), along with the St Catherine's Admissions Form. As part of this form, we ask, if parents/carers are separated, that permission be sought from both parties to proceed with the Admissions Process.

In some cases, a member of the assessment panel may ask to visit your child/young person in their current education setting. This gives us the opportunity to learn more about the student and whether we can meet their needs.

Stage 2 – Informal visit

If the assessment team thinks that St Catherine's may be a suitable placement, then a family visit to St Catherine's, including the child/young person who is seeking the placement, will be arranged.

During the visit, we will discuss the child/young person's needs to come to a considered opinion as to whether St Catherine's might be an appropriate placement. We consider whether:

- the child/young person falls within the school's approved range of special educational needs;
- staff feel that the school is able to meet the needs as described; and
- the child/young person is likely to benefit from attending St Catherine's.

If the responses are positive, then the application can proceed to the next stage.

St Catherine's does hold Open Days and parents/carers that attend the Open Day do not have to attend a separate informal visit.

Stage 3 – Student interview/assessment

The assessment/interview helps us all ascertain whether St Catherine's is right for each particular child/young person and his/her family.

As part of the interview the child/young person will join an appropriate class group and follow the usual timetable. Although no formal testing is carried out, observations will take place in all settings and informal assessments undertaken with Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and specialist teachers.

Residential interviews at St Catherine's School are three days. The interview for the Sixth Form College is four days in length. Students seeking a residential placement will be supported by our care staff outside of school hours. Local children/young people usually attend on a non-residential basis and may attend one or more assessment days, rather than a three-day interview, with other local children/young people.

For safeguarding purposes, it will be necessary to verify the identity of students on interview.

Parents/carers will be asked to provide a passport, or where one is not available, a photo signed by a recognised professional e.g. teacher, doctor, social worker. We also require that medical forms etc are completed before the interview. If these are not completed the interview cannot proceed.

Following the interview, we will inform parents/carers (and the local authority, as appropriate) of the outcome in writing.

Further Conditions of Admission

All places are offered subject to confirmation of appropriate funding and on a first term's trial basis. If staff feel that St Catherine's is not able to adequately meet a student's needs as a result of the first term, then parents (and the local authority) will be informed as soon as possible.

All placements will be reviewed annually as part of the Annual Review process.

SENDIS Tribunals

Parents considering a formal tribunal hearing if their local authority does not agree to the placement may find it helpful to contact St Catherine's to discuss their particular circumstances.

The School's Approach for Teaching Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

We offer a differentiated and personalised approach to learning. Students access the curriculum at a level appropriate to meet their needs. Students are grouped according to differing attributes according to the cohort, this could be by age, stage, social aspects or general ability, which results in classes ranging from six to ten students. We teach using a primary based model where appropriate, moving to a secondary based model as students progress through the school.

In addition, we offer comprehensive and fully integrated speech and language therapy and occupational therapy.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting of Student Progress

Please refer to our Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy November 2018 for full details.

Statement of Assessment Principles

Assessment of skills, knowledge, behaviour and attitudes is vital if we are to identify students' individual needs and plan their future learning.

Measurement against national data is important and provides us with a benchmark upon which to assess students against comparative cohorts. It is important to add however, that national comparisons are just a guide upon which to begin the scrutiny of overall performance.

This enables us to:

- recognise achievements and identify strengths and weaknesses in particular environments and situations, in order that appropriate help and support can be provided;
- ensure continuity and appropriate progression for each student;
- help in monitoring the effectiveness of teaching;
- fulfil current legal requirements both for the National Curriculum and the school curriculum, and
- further inform school improvement.

Assessment involves measuring performance against certain criteria. To ensure consistent standards (moderation), all staff will need to know and understand the precise meaning of these criteria.

Assessment and Recording Systems

The school uses a bespoke system that enables tracking of progress in all areas of learning (education, therapy and care). This provides staff with a complete 'at a glance' overview for every student. Below are the specific areas from which we collect data.

- 'I Can' statements based upon stages of learning for KS2 – KS4 - termly update. Core subjects are based in line with National Curriculum expected outcomes for Year 1 – Year 9. Foundation subjects are based in line with Key Stage outcomes.
- For KS2 – KS4 annual target setting in all subjects based on teacher assessment and prior attainment. These are scrutinised termly through student progress monitoring meetings.
- For Post 16 annual targets set based on predicted grades in accreditation or completion of course. These are scrutinised termly through student progress monitoring meetings.
- Liaison aims – termly
- Accreditation results (KS4 and Post 16)
- Therapy assessments and progress towards achieving outcomes in individual programmes
- Life skills assessment in care time
- Attendance
- Evidence of current levels through work scrutiny and moderation – termly
- Behaviour through Behaviour For Learning Tracker, Positive Behaviour Management Plans and incident forms

Reporting to Parents

- Annual Review reports which include reports from education, therapy progress and life skills progress (within care time)
- End of year progress report (education, therapy and care where appropriate)
- Termly Liaison with report of progress and new targets set
- Termly reports of progress towards targets set in education, therapy progress and life skills progress (where appropriate)
- Parents' / Carers' consultation meetings
- Home – school communication diaries
- Telephone calls
- Home visits
- Emails

Curriculum Offer

St Catherine's offers a broad, balanced and highly differentiated curriculum relevant to the needs of its students. Whilst the students receive their entitlement to the subjects of the National Curriculum a strong emphasis is also placed upon therapeutic support including social interaction sessions and life skills session. We also ensure the curriculum covers aspects of spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) education, key skills and life skills, and promotes fundamental British values. In the Sixth Form students choose from a wide range of accredited courses including GCSEs, BTECs and Entry Level qualifications.

Extended Provision

There are many opportunities for learning outside the classroom – swimming, college links courses, work experience, forest schools and numerous PE activities.

Activities in care time cover a vast range of experiences including Duke of Edinburgh, sea cadets, karate, football etc.

Support Available for Improving the Emotional and Social Development of Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

This aspect of learning is as important as cognitive development. To facilitate this the school employs six Speech and Language Therapists, four Speech and Language Therapy Assistants, five Occupational Therapists and two Occupational Therapy Assistants, who undertake individual, group and class work around improving social, communication, sensory, motor and life skills.

Additional counselling services can be sought externally when required.

The school works in close partnership with CAMHS making referrals where necessary, and regularly liaising for general advice and guidance.

Facilities and Equipment for Students with SEND

- ICT suite
- Food Technology room
- Art and photography room
- Design technology room
- Music room
- Sensory Integration / OT rooms
- Speech and Language facilities
- OT equipment throughout the school
- Outdoor learning areas
- Sports field
- Two minibuses
- Small library
- A small Chapel
- Multi-use Games Area (MUGA)
- Science Lab

Working in Partnership with Parents/Carers

At St Catherine's we believe that we can best meet the needs of individual children by working closely with parents/carers. We believe that good communication between the school and the home is essential. We aim to develop an effective and sustainable long-term partnership. We believe that an informed and supportive parent body will help raise standards and help children achieve their full potential.

We aim to develop partnerships between parents/carers and staff which are based on mutual trust and respect and which promote the sharing of information and knowledge for the

benefit of the children in our care. We aim to work together collaboratively, with a shared agenda and common sense of purpose in order to improve outcomes for all children.

Effective communications enable us to share our aims and values through keeping parents/carers well informed about school life - this reinforces the crucial role that parents/carers play in supporting the school in educating their children.

We communicate through a range of different strategies. Some of our communications are a result of a statutory requirement, others reflect what we believe is important to our students.

Before Starting at St Catherine's, we will:

- Ensure that there is a clear and effective system of communication between school and parents/carers when arranging a visit to the school.
- Make every effort to ensure that information for parents/carers is made accessible to them e.g. welcome pack, prospectus, policies, website etc.
- Ensure that any consent forms/agreements are completed.
- Ensure that the required contact information is kept up to date.
- Establish, where appropriate, the name of a child's legal guardian.
- Keep an up-to-date record of any particular requirements/ needs of children. These records will be kept securely.
- Ensure that arrangements for the children's arrival and collection are clear and understood by all staff and parents/carers.
- Establish a system in which only authorised adults can collect children and create a plan that can be used in an emergency when the recognised adult cannot collect a child.
- Ensure that information about children is treated as confidential, is held securely and is only shared with parents/carers and relevant personnel.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers understand that information held on children and their families is confidential.
- Encourage parents/carers to contact the school if any issues arise regarding their child's progress or well-being.

Sharing Information

Curriculum Updates

Parents/carers can access information through the school website or by contacting staff directly.

Termly Reports

Each term we provide a written report to parents/carers on each child's progress in all areas of the National Curriculum. This report also identifies areas of strength and areas for further development. In addition, termly data is sent home for therapy and care (where appropriate).

Consultation Meetings

Parents/Carers have the opportunity to meet with teachers, therapists, care staff and senior leaders each term to discuss progress, celebrate successes, and to identify how parents/carers can support their child at home. Parents are able to look at their child's work during these meetings. These meetings are usually held on the last day of each term.

Annual Review of EHCP

This is a meeting to determine whether or not the EHCP should be maintained and remains appropriate. The student's progress against educational targets and outcomes is the principal criterion and provides the basis for discussion about the provision required to meet the individual's needs. Detailed reports are written for this meeting by all professionals.

Liaison Aims

These are set each term and are based upon targets in the EHCP. They are reviewed and revised termly through liaison meetings (in-school termly professional meetings for each student) and parents/carers are sent evaluated copies at the end of each term.

End of Year Reports

This gives parents an overview of all curriculum areas, topics covered and a comment on progress. There is also a report from the Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist and Care Team (where appropriate).

Newsletters

These are sent home at the end of every week and keep parents/carers and other stakeholders informed of news and events about the school.

Letters/Well done postcards

Individual staff members will send letters from time to time to inform parents/carers of planned visits/outings etc. Staff members also send out "Well done" postcards to students at their home address.

Day to Day Contact

We encourage parents/carers to first discuss any concerns or issues about their children with the class tutor. The class tutor will liaise with other staff as and when necessary. Parents/carers can make contact via a Home-School book or by telephone before and after school. Parents/carers can contact the school nurse directly if the issue is medically related or the heads of houses if it is care related.

Parent Hub Text Message service is used for urgent messages.

Home-School Liaison Book

These are designed to help ensure meaningful two-way communication about events, behaviours and home learning etc. Comments should be positive as far as possible and the class teachers determine the frequency of completion.

Celebrations/Festivals

We encourage parents to attend coffee mornings, open days, performances and festivals to celebrate the work of the children.

Arrangements for Consulting Students and Involving them in their Education

All children in our school are treated with dignity and respect. The school aims to fully personalise the curriculum for each student in order that they can access and experience success throughout their school life.

There are two student councils, one for school and another for the sixth form which enable students to contribute and decide on aspects of school life relating to their needs. In addition, students take part in the selection process of new staff by interviewing them and making recommendations to the selection panel.

The assessment and annual review process of EHCPs includes the choices and views of students. Where possible, students are encouraged to think of their own targets as part of this process.

Students also have a user friendly complaints procedure, should they need to make a complaint. These are dealt with in the first instance by the Head of Care.

School's Accessibility Policy

Valuing diversity is central to achieving the overall aim of St Catherine's School and fully supports the spirit of our mission statement. At St Catherine's we are committed to ensuring equality of education and opportunity for disabled students, staff and all those receiving services from the school. We recognise and welcome the proactive nature of the duty to promote disability equality and aim to further develop our culture of inclusion and diversity in which people feel free to disclose their disability and to participate fully in school life. We are therefore committed to making reasonable adjustments to ensure that the school environment is as accessible as possible. In addition, all students have an entitlement to access a curriculum that is appropriate and differentiated to meet their needs.

At St Catherine's we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Transitions in and out of St Catherine's

The admission of students to St Catherine's usually follows a formal interview process. Where possible, students spend some days transitioning into the school prior to formally starting.

The school works very closely with our independent Careers Adviser to ensure that the students' best interests are considered when making decisions on future provisions and, as far as possible, along with their parents/carers, are fully involved in the decision making process. Staff work closely with receiving provisions to ensure they have a detailed understanding of the student's needs. Staff spend time preparing students for interviews at future provisions.

If a student leaves St Catherine's all his / her records are sent on to the next provision. These records will be sent within two weeks of a request for records being received. If for any reason the school is not given the address of the receiving school, or no request is forthcoming, the appropriate Local Authority's Education Welfare Service is informed, so that the student's whereabouts can be traced.

Continuous Professional Development of Staff

The school is a learning environment for both staff and students. Staff are keen to continue to develop their range of skills within the field of special educational needs. The School Development Plan outlines areas for development and the training schedule relates directly to this. All teachers have an action plan linked to improving their own teaching and learning. In addition, senior and middle leaders have action plans that are associated with their additional areas of responsibility, which again link directly to the School Development Plan. The training schedule is developed to meet the needs of all staff. Governors and Trustees are invited to take an active part in all relevant staff training events.

How the Board of Trustees Involves Others - Including Health, Social Services, Local Authority Services and Voluntary Organisations in Meeting the Needs of Students and in Supporting Their Families

We have a wide range of staff working together within the school to support the children and their families. The vast majority are employed directly by the school:

Employed by the School

- Education staff - teachers, teaching assistants and higher level teaching assistants
- Therapy staff – speech and language therapists, speech and language therapy assistants, occupational therapists and occupational therapy assistants
- Care staff
- Admin staff
- Site management staff
- Nursing staff
- Family Liaison Officer

Other External Professionals working alongside the School

The following professionals, where required, work alongside St Catherine's staff to ensure students' needs are met:

- Physiotherapist
- Paediatricians
- Learning Disability Team
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychologists
- Educational Welfare Officers
- Social Services
- Youth Trust Counselling Service

Transport to and from school is organised by the Local Authorities.

Future Plans for Continuing to Develop SEND Provision

- Further develop our Outreach provision
- Continue to expand the Post 19 provision

- Continue links with outstanding special schools
- Continue to undertake relevant research that directly impacts positively on outcomes for our students

Arrangement for Considering Complaints from Parents/Carers

The school aims to provide a high quality education and service for all its students. Complaints and concerns regarding provision are treated seriously and are seen as a constructive part of school development. Parents/carers should approach the relevant staff member responsible for the area of concern in the first instance. St Catherine's will make every effort to resolve the problem promptly through informal discussion with the relevant member(s) of staff.

If the concern is not resolved at this stage, an informal discussion should be arranged with the Principal. If the concern is about the Principal, an informal discussion should be arranged with the Chair of the Board. If the response of the member of staff and/or the Principal at the informal stage is unsatisfactory, the concern should be put in writing to the Principal or the Chair of the Board (if the concern is about the Principal), using the form in our Complaints Policy. If the complainant remains unhappy with the response, the Chair of the Board will call a hearing of the Complaints Panel Hearing before an independent person such as a civil mediation provider accredited by the Civil Mediation Council. The school has a Complaints Policy available for further information.

Key Points of Contact

Address: Grove Road, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, PO38 1TT

Telephone: 01983 852722

Email: general@stcatherines.org.uk

Website: www.stcatherines.org.uk

Registered Charity No: 288148

Company No: 1757474

Principal: Mrs Sarah Thompson

Local Offer for SEND

Isle of Wight Local Offer for parents and carers of children with SEND aged 0-25 years can be found here:

<https://www.iwight.com/localoffer/View/Special-educational-need-support-services/School-Special-Educational-Needs-SEN-Offer>