



Welcome to our Spring St Joseph's RC Primary School SEN Newsletter!

Each term, our newsletter will provide information about a focus of SEND at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. We will also keep you updated with the Hereford local offer and guidance.

Welcome!



I am Mrs Gurney, and as St Joseph's Special Educational Needs and Disability Coordinator (SENCO), I am here to offer support and advice regarding additional needs or SEND support for your child.

As a school, we value the engagement of our parents so please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions. My contact email address is:

igurney@stjosephs.hereford.sch.uk

Alternatively, you may find further information using this QR code about our SEND provision on the school website:



Contents of this term's newsletter:

- Welcome
- Hereford's local offer
- SEND in the classroom.
- SEND in Focus - Autism
- SEND in Focus - Sensory processing difficulties.
- SEND Support for families.

I am keen in setting up a 'Turn up Tuesday' every half term, so that parents can meet informally and discuss experiences, seek and share advice with others who have children with SEND. Please let me know if this is something you would be interested in!



Herefordshire's Local SEND offer and guidance can be found here!





SEND NEWS!

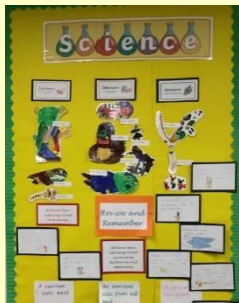


SEND in the classroom at St Joseph's

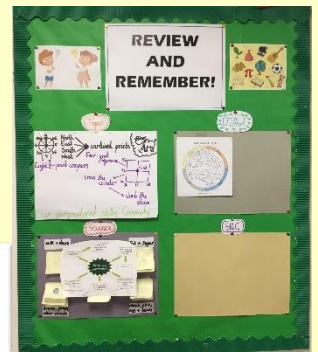
At St Joseph's, we have created a uniquely tailored curriculum that ensures that each child is at the heart of everything that we do. We provide purposeful, real-life experiences and opportunities to support all children to 'know more and remember more.' We recognise that all pupils learn differently and with this in mind, teachers and teaching assistants adapt the classroom to provide a learning environment that supports the different learning styles of all children.



How do we create a learning environment at St Joseph's that meets the needs of SEND pupils?



Working Walls to help children 'Review and Remember'



Wobble cushions and specific seating arrangements.

Tabletop Resources for each lesson



Visual daily timetables



Access to laptops and Talk Tins

Coloured Overlays offered for all pupils.



Breaking work down into chunks and scaffolding support.

Reflection spaces and Wellbeing support

Fidgets and sensory aids



Sloping boards and additional writing aids

Specialized dictionaries





SEND NEWS!



SEND IN FOCUS

Hearing the words 'Special Educational Needs' or 'Learning difficulty' can be a worrying experience for parents especially if little is known about the different 'terminology, phrases, conditions, and diagnosis that are often talked about by professionals. At St Joseph's, we want to help parents to make sense of the 'jargon' and give some guidance, advice and ways you can help your child at home.

This term's focus is Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC/ASD)

Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) is a lifelong spectrum of developmental conditions that affect how people communicate and experience the world around them. It is not an illness to be cured; instead, it means that the brain works in a different way to other people.

Supporting an Autistic Child: A Guide for Parents

If you have a young child, you might also notice some of these:

- They might not respond to their name.
- They may avoid direct eye contact.
- When you smile at them, they don't smile back.
- They become very upset at disliking tastes, smells or sounds.
- They repeat the same phrases.
- They don't talk as much as other children of a similar age.
- They don't understand jokes.
- They make repetitive movements, such as flapping their hands or rocking their body.

If you have an older child, you might notice:

- They have a very keen interest in a certain subject or activity.
- They happily spend time alone because they find it hard to make friends.
- They have a very literal understanding of language.
- They may get very upset when asked to do something unexpected.
- They like a regular daily routine and become anxious when the normality is disrupted.
- They might need people to play by their rules in a game and get very upset if others don't follow the rules.
- They find it hard to relate to children their own age and therefore prefer playing with younger children or adults.
- They have difficulty adjusting their behaviour to different social contexts.
- They find it hard to follow simple instructions.

Taken from Twinkl - Autism Guide for parents

Every autistic child has their own individual profile of strengths and areas of difference and as their parent you know them best. The adjustments outlined below may not work for all autistic children but we do have an understanding that autistic children and young people show differences in three main areas:

- Social understanding and communication**
...interacting, playing and developing relationships and communicating, understanding and using language.
- Sensory Processing**
...taking in and perceiving sensory information from the environment. This may include hyper (high) or hypo (low) sensitivity in relation to the 8 senses: sight, sound, taste, touch, smell, balance, body awareness and internal sensations.
- Information Processing and Planning**
...levels of attention, processing of information and learning style.

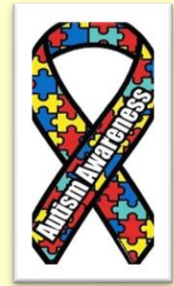
Inspirational people who have Autism



Elon Musk



Greta Thunberg - Environmental activist



SEND IN FOCUS

This term's focus is **Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC/ASD)**

Videos about Autism



What is Autism?



Amazing things can happen



My Autism and me- CBBC News round

How can I help my child?

Model Clear Communication

Say their name to gain attention, speak slowly and clearly. Use familiar language and think about using visual cues if your child finds communication difficult. Always give time to process.

Have clear boundaries.

Introduce clear boundaries that your child knows and understands. Keep consistent so your expectations are understood.

Celebrate every success.

Celebrate the everyday successes that your child has achieved - however small they may be. Your celebration acts as encouragement and motivates them to keep going even if they may find something difficult.

Is there a difference between boys and girls?

There can be a difference in the way Autism looks in girls and boys. Older girls can be better at 'masking' or hiding aspects of their Autism than older boys are. They may appear to cope better in social situations and hide their feelings. Because of their more subtle presentation of Autism, it can be very difficult to diagnose and therefore their needs may not be addressed as quickly.

Reduce the Unknown

Many children like routine - not knowing what is going to happen next can be frightening - use visual timetables and now/next boards to help your child see what their day will look like.

Be Flexible

There may be times of the year e.g. Halloween, Christmas, or events e.g. parties that your child finds overwhelming. Don't be afraid to make adjustments - could they arrive later to the party? Could you take food that they might like instead of party food? Is the noise too overwhelming and they need a quiet space to go to?



SEND NEWS!



SEND IN FOCUS

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This term's focus is Sensory Processing Difficulties (SPD)

What is sensory processing mean?

We have eight different sensory systems, five of them are more well known, and three of them you may not have heard of before. Everybody experiences the world in different ways, sometimes the way your body processes sensory information can make it difficult to join in with daily life or experiences.

The videos below provide additional information about sensory processing:

Understanding sensory processing and your child:

<https://youtu.be/9bJjTtoJBc8>

Regulating sensory strategies:

<https://youtu.be/-Ma2Y7RBIT8>

Steamrollers for regulation:

https://youtu.be/T7_DK5-tKdE

Superhero rocks for regulation:

https://youtu.be/l6_ut8QVr7c

'Hands on' technique for regulation:

<https://youtu.be/tuPZx7XIxyw>



Sensory Resources for parents:

<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/download/1103/sensory-service-virtual-therapy-area/26573/making-sense-of-your-senses-2.pdf>

<https://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/download/389/child-development/8323/sensory-top-tips.pdf>

What do I do next?

If you are concerned that your child may be presenting with signs of autism or sensory processing difficulties, speak to your GP or School SENCo- Mrs. Gurney. Autism and SPD will present in all environments including school, and it is an opportunity to discuss your concerns and talk about next steps.



SEND Support for families across Hereford



Parenting Groups Spring 2024

Start Date	Time	Location	Facilitators	Type of course	Age Group	To book a place
25 th January – 7 th March – Thursday	12:30 – 14:30	Virtual	Darcy Webb – Ben Powell	Triple P Stepping Stones- For children with additional needs	2-11	Please email parentinggroups@herefordshire.gov.uk Or call - Children's Help and Advice Team on 01432 260261 – Self Referrals Only
25 th January – 7 th March – Thursday	9:30 – 11:30	Herford Room Plough Lane Offices	Charlotte Lacey – Lorraine Rigby	Triple P Standard Group	2-11	Please email parentinggroups@herefordshire.gov.uk Or call - Children's Help and Advice Team on 01432 260261– Self Referrals Only
10 th April – 8 th May – evening Wednesday 9 th April – 7 th May – daytime Tuesday	17:45 – 19:45 10:00 – 12:00	Virtual	Evening – Rosie Watkins – Yarrow Ingham Daytime – Caitlin Quinlan Langford – Emmy Newton	Transitions Group for Separated or Divorced parents		Please email parentinggroups@herefordshire.gov.uk Or call - Children's Help and Advice Team on 01432 260261– Self Referrals Only
March 1 st – 15 th March - Friday	10:00 12:00	Virtual	Megan Blower – Ellice Meredith	Fear Less group for parents of children with anxiety	6 – Upwards	Please email parentinggroups@herefordshire.gov.uk Or call - Children's Help and Advice Team on 01432 260261– Self Referrals Only
25 th January – 7 th March – Thursday	10:00 – 12:00	Virtual	Chloe Clarke – Fiona Grant	Teen Triple P Group	11 - 16	Please email parentinggroups@herefordshire.gov.uk Or call - Children's Help and Advice Team on 01432 260261– Self Referrals Only



The Tripple P referral form can be found here!



TALK COMMUNITY DIRECTORY



Through the [Winter of Wellbeing \(WoW\) grant](#), organisations across Herefordshire are holding fun and free activities during the winter months! This is to support the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of families during the cost-of-living crisis, by enabling them to access free activities. All events will include **free** hot food and drink. Families will be able to access information and advice to support them around the cost of living.

Early Help- Supporting families



Based on the national [Supporting Families programme](#), this local initiative assists Herefordshire families with complex or pressing needs, through interventions such as Early Help for families. Early help can be provided at any stage of a child or young person's life, from birth through to the teenage years, or up to 25 years old for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).