




This document can be summarised and made available in alternative languages or formats upon request.

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## Welcome

I would like to welcome you to our school.

St. John's Special School and College provides a supportive and happy environment through which our pupils, professionals and parents **achieve together**.

We are very proud of our school which has now been judged **outstanding** by four successive **OfSTED** inspection visits.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss how we can work together, I look forward to hearing from you.

**Antonia Drysdale**

*Head of School*



*“A happy place”*

*“Always friendly and always calm”*

*“My daughter enjoys school, can't wait for the end of the holiday...”*



# Our School

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St. John's Special School and College is one of three special schools within Bedford Borough. This prospectus gives a brief description of St. John's School, its organisation and how it works to achieve its aims.

## Key facts:

- St. John's is a day school for children and young people between the ages of 2 to 19 years
- Pupils present a range of complex needs which include
  - Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
  - Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
  - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
  - Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)
- St. John's became a **Specialist School in Communication and Interaction** in September 2009
- St John's acquired **Academy** status with effect from 1st September 2011
- The latest **OfSTED** inspection of the school in September 2014 judged St. John's to be an **outstanding** school



# Vision

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The vision of St. John's is reflected in our mission statement, "achieving together".

We work in partnership with families to develop every pupil's self-awareness, self-confidence and self respect.

Our **Specialist School in Communication and Interaction** status enables us to provide additional support to pupils in developing their social communication skills.



Our key aims for our pupils and students are to:

- Provide a safe, healthy and happy school environment
- Value and respect all pupils, parents and staff
- Provide meaningful and motivating learning opportunities via a relevant curriculum
- Ensure that all pupils receive personalised learning for their individual needs
- Develop personalised communication forms to assist understanding and self-expression
- Promote positive self-esteem and respect for others
- Encourage pupils to express preferences, make choices and engage in decision making
- Work with families, professionals and staff as a team to meet the individual needs of each pupil
- Work in partnership with other schools & organisations to develop inclusion opportunities



# Organisation



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The school is organised into a **Primary Department** (2-11 years) including Early Years Foundation Stage and a **Secondary Department** (11-19 years) including a Post-16 Provision. The departments are led by members of the School Leadership Team.

Class groups are arranged by age, physical and sensory needs and social communication compatibility. Class sizes reflect the needs of the pupils but are much smaller than those at most mainstream schools.

A group of older pupils at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 are based at the **St. John's Bungalow** at **Hill Rise, Kempston**



# Home School Partnership

St. John's is a school which recognises the importance of working in partnership with pupils' families to optimise the abilities of each pupil. The staff team work with each family to ensure that every pupil individual skills and talents are monitored and developed on an on-going basis.

The school seeks to support families at all times via:

- Pre-booked meetings at home or school
- Daily home to school books
- Parent/carer groups, workshops and coffee mornings
- Regular school newsletters
- Consultation evenings
- Sibling support group activities
- School family events and fun-days
- A dedicated family room
- The school web-site
- The Home School Agreement
- The St. John's Special School Association (SJSSA)



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## Pupil Behaviour

St. John's actively provides a friendly, calm and consistent atmosphere and curriculum which enables all staff and pupils to feel safe. The school has clear expectations of pupils and an agreed approach towards behaviour support.

The staff team focus is always on promoting positive pupil behaviour through consistency of staff attitude, regular and predictable routines, clear rules and boundaries and the systematic use of rewards and sanctions.

The Policy on **Promoting Positive Pupil Behaviour** and the Policy on **Anti-Bullying** are available on the school web-site or school office on request.



# Facilities



Pupils benefit from a range of resources including:

- Hydrotherapy swimming pool
- Jacuzzi
- Interactive light and sound room
- Two soft-play areas
- Two ICT suites
- Sensory playground
- Medical room
- Early years playground
- Adapted outdoor play and recreational facilities
- Post-16 horticulture provision
- Six school mini-buses



# Curriculum

Pupils at St. John's receive specialist teaching and support therapies in all areas of their curriculum. The school uses the **Early Years Foundation Stage** and **National Curriculum** as the basis of priority learning areas for each pupil's **Individual Education Plan (IEP)**.

Pupils and their families are supported through the requirements of the formal annual review process in partnership with the relevant staff team members and professionals.

Older students in the post-16 provision take relevant courses, which can provide accredited qualifications at Entry Level.

St. John's aims to identify and meet individual pupil needs through a personalised curriculum. The weekly timetable will reflect a range of age-appropriate and engaging lessons and activities within consistent boundaries and structured routines providing security and promoting independence.

A **Curriculum Forecast** is sent home at the beginning of each term explaining the term's theme and the main activities the pupil will experience during that period of time. This provides their family with an opportunity to follow up on work carried out at school and reinforce learning at home.





# School Day



The school day commences at 9.05am and finishes at 3.20pm. Many of our pupils and students travel to and from school using the Borough Transport Service. The Borough Transport Service can be contacted via Borough Hall.

## Uniform

All pupils, excluding those within the post-16 provision, are expected to wear the school uniform. Full details can be obtained from the School Office.

## School Meals

St. John's is accredited as a **Healthy School** and meals are cooked on site and the kitchen will provide special diets for medical or religious reasons. Alternatively pupils may bring a packed lunch.

## Allergies

All precautions are taken to ensure that any pupil with an allergy does not come into contact with the relevant food group. A care plan and a risk assessment is undertaken specific to that pupil.



# Staff Team

Our staff team is well established and highly experienced. Many of our current staff at all levels started their careers at St. John's. We continue to encourage and mentor new teachers from the ranks of our dedicated support staff team. This pro-active attitude to professional development truly embodies the school ethos of **Achieving Together**.



Our current staff to pupil ratio is above 1:2 so ensuring a high level of individual pupil interaction.

The school is led by a School Leadership Group which includes the Head of School, three Assistant Headteachers, four Department Leaders, and HR Manager.

Teaching staff include;

- Specialists in autistic spectrum conditions (ASC) and multi-sensory impairment (MSI)
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA)
- Learning Support Assistants (LSA)

*An up-to-date staff list is available on the school web-site or on request via the school office.*

The school also employs directly or contracts the services of a range of

- Speech and Language Therapist
- Technical Manager
- Transitions Manager
- Music Therapists





professionals including;

St. John's has developed an extended network of professional contacts beyond the school. Bedford Borough Council provides professional support including;

- Educational Psychology
- Advisers for Sensory Impairment



- Social Workers

The Health Service provides professional support from:

- An on site Special Needs Nursing Team
- School Paediatrician
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Dental services
- Clinical Psychology
- Community Nursing Team
- Wheelchair Services



# Community Partners

The school curriculum includes **life skills** that must be taught with resources beyond St. John's.

Through our Specialist School Status, St. John's works closely with a number of mainstream partner schools to develop inclusive practice.



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Schools and colleges we currently work with include:

- Cauldwell Lower School
- Westfield Middle School
- Biddenham International School & Sports College
- Peter Pan Nursery
- Bedford College



Our **Transitions Manager** at St. John's liaises with work-related learning providers and colleges ensuring that students and their families are fully involved in the process of transition into post school placements.

The school works collaboratively with local charitable organisations such as **Bedford & District Mencap** and **Autism Bedfordshire** to support week-end clubs, summer play-schemes and residential trips.

Support from **The Harpur Trust** has also allowed our highly successful music therapy provision to flourish.

## Admissions

Parents or carers who feel that their child may benefit from education at St. John's are welcome to make contact with the school and arrange to visit.

Formal placement at St. John's School is through the Local Authority following assessment of educational need. However, in certain circumstances a pupil may join the school prior to full completion of the assessment process.

Pupils are admitted throughout the year depending upon availability of places within the appropriate class group.



# Safeguarding

St. John's is committed to safeguarding all pupils. A designated senior member of staff, supported by the Safeguarding Team ensures that safeguarding procedures and practice are embedded across the school.

All staff, regular volunteers and governors are required to have Disclosure and Barring Service checks prior to commencing work. Induction for all new staff includes safeguarding and such training is updated with all staff on an annual basis.

The School Policy on Safeguarding is available on the web-site and families of new pupils are given a copy on admission.

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# Governors

Governors at St. John's play an active and supportive role in the life of the school.

The governing body is a diverse group which includes parents, staff representatives and members of the local community. Governors are encouraged to contribute as time, experience and interest allow; witnessing the development of the school is an engaging and rewarding experience.

The role of the governing body is to:

- Set the school's vision and strategic aims, agreeing plans and making creative use of resources
- Monitor performance, acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher to support and challenge them in developing the school
- Ensure that the school fulfils its statutory duties and remains accountable to the children and families it serves

The school always welcomes applications to join the governing body. If you would like to be part of shaping the future of our school please contact the School Office.



# Contacts



**St. John's Special School and College**  
Bedford Road, Bedford, MK42 8AA

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Chair of Governors: **Kirsten Rimmer**

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## **SEND Advice team**

Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP

Phone: 01234 276267  
Email: [sendadvice@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:sendadvice@bedford.gov.uk)

The SEND Advice team offer free confidential and impartial service to parents and carers of children who have, or may have, Special Educational Needs (SEN).

## **SEN Transport Team**

Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Bedford MK42 9AP

Phone: 01234 276116 / 228771  
Email: [sen.transport@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:sen.transport@bedford.gov.uk)