



St. Mary's School and College



Providing specialist education therapy and residential care for pupils and students with speech language and communication needs.

Welcome to St. Mary's Special School and College



Foreword: Natalie Edwards, Principal

St Mary's provides fantastic opportunities for residential and day pupils/students. I am incredibly proud of our provision at St Mary's. St Mary's is a School and College where each pupil/student is supported and encouraged to reach their potential everyone involved in the school is ambitious for all of our pupil/student.

Specialist support for speech, language and communication difficulties and associated complex needs

We are a non-maintained residential special school based on the south coast of England in Bexhill, East Sussex. The school caters for both residential and day pupils/students aged 5 to 19. Since 1922, it has been our mission to ensure that children with speech, language and communication needs and learning needs receive the integrated support they need to enable them to achieve their potential and take their place in the community.

A total communication environment

St Mary's is a total communication environment. This means we utilise a range of approaches that enable our pupils/students to succeed in their development of their communication skills. All of our staff, including those in non-child facing roles, are trained in Sign-Supported English. Our signing team provide assistance for parents/carers who wish to learn to sign in order that they can support their child at home. In addition, we value and proactively invest in communication and learning technologies.

A personalised plan for each child

In addition to supporting Speech, Language and Communication needs the school and college offers a personalised plan for each child to access a broad and balanced curriculum fully integrated with speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, social, emotional and mental health support and opportunities to develop independence and life skills. Our facilities offer excellent opportunities to support individual needs and include a swimming pool, library, sports hall, Food Tech, Science, DT and IT rooms, physiotherapy and sensory integration facilities and therapy support rooms.

Supporting Independence

At St Mary's, we promote working towards independence in every aspect of our provision. This means our school pupils and college students are well supported to become as independent as possible in their learning and personal development.

Residential facilities

Our on-site residential houses offer a 'homely' and supportive environment for pupils/students to live and learn for up to 38 weeks a year. There is an emphasis on providing a warm, welcoming and safe residential experience at the school and pupils/students are given every opportunity to do things for themselves wherever possible.

Parent and carer partnership

We pride ourselves on working closely with parents/carers. You will see, by reading the many parents/carers stories in this prospectus, that partnership working is very important to us. We champion the link between school and family and work very hard to involve families in their child's education here at St Mary's.

Get in touch

The best way to understand what we can offer is to come and meet us and experience St Mary's for yourself. We are always pleased to arrange visits for prospective pupils/students and their families. To make an appointment or to simply ask us a question, please call the school office on Tel: 01424 730740; email: admin@stmarysbexhill.org



CEO, Richard Preece, says...

Welcome to our wonderful school and college. St Mary's has a unique position in the world of special education and we are proud of the work that we are doing to support and challenge our pupils/students to be the best that they can be.

Understanding

We understand the needs of our pupils/students and the difficulties and challenges they face. We also understand the difficulties many parents/carers will have encountered in order to secure special school provision for their child.



We know that a special school is not where some parents/carers want their child to be placed for the duration of their school career. Whatever the circumstances, we will always do our best to support and reassure the families with whom we work. We are always ambitious for our pupils/students to become as independent, resilient and successful as possible in all aspects of their learning and social and personal development.

Improving Standards

St Mary's is on a path of growth and we are confident that we can make excellent provision for all of our pupils/students. We are working closely in partnership with nearby Torfield and Saxon Mount Academy Trust (a successful SEND multi academy trust) where I am the Executive Headteacher and



CEO, so that St Mary's develops its unique provision further. We are all ambitious for our school and college and we aim to provide consistently high quality education, therapy and residential provision for all our pupils/students.

Next Steps

Finally, we aim to raise aspirations for pupils/students, enabling them to be confident in their next steps in education and in their preparation for adulthood. We genuinely go the extra mile to support successful transitions and ensure that our pupils/students are exceptionally well prepared for adulthood.

Welcome to St Mary's School and College.

The Talking Trust

The Talking Trust is the Charitable Trust that is the responsible body for St Mary's School and College. The Trustees bring a wealth of experience to the Trust and, supported by the CEO they oversee the operation of the School and College. The School and College makes provision for pupils and students with speech, language and communication needs and learning difficulties. The school and college can cater for over 100 pupils/students aged 5-19.

School day

Settling in

The school day starts at 8:40am. There are breaks during the day and our school day ends at 3:20pm for KS1 and 4:00pm for all other key stages (Friday 2:30pm finish for all key stages).

Transport

The Local Authority may provide transport between your home and school and the Transport Department will make the necessary arrangements. To ensure the safety of our pupils/students, escorts will travel on all minibuses and in some single taxis. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child travels safely and behaves appropriately on the transport.

Uniform

School pupils at St Mary's are required to wear a uniform, which consists of a grey sweatshirt or cardigan bearing the school logo, plus a green polo shirt with the logo and dark grey trousers or skirts or culottes. Pupils must wear black shoes. Green and white checked summer dresses and shorts are optional. College students are not required to wear a uniform. However, their clothes should be smart and appropriate for a college or workplace. For residential children, parents/carers should contact Head of Care for information on what is required for their stay.

College and residential students

College students are not required to wear a uniform. However, their clothes should be smart and appropriate for a college or workplace. For residential children, parents/carers should contact The Head of Care for information on what is required for their stay.

School meals

Children can choose to have a nutritious hot or cold school meal. We are committed to healthy eating and all residential pupils/students receive school meals, which are included during their stay. Day pupils are charged separately for school meals. St Mary's does not use nuts in school meals.



Leo has made fantastic progress and has become more independent with the support of staff at St Mary's School and College

Leo who is 18, lives in Bexhill-on-sea with her mum Gina. Leo, who has autism, global delay, cerebral palsy and is partially deaf, has attended St Mary's for nearly eight years.

Excellent support

Gina believes no other school could have done as well with Leo as St Mary's School and College have. Gina says: "Leo has come a long way since she joined the school in 2014. Her behaviour has improved, she has become more independent, and she has developed into a caring, sensitive girl who likes looking after younger children."

Patient staff

When Leo started at St Mary's she had spent three months out of education after the family moved house and came to live in the area, Gina says. "At that time her behaviour was difficult to control and she would lash out at other children. She needed a lot of time to process information and to move on from one activity to another. But having one-to-one support in the classroom at St Mary's was a great help and the staff kindly moved her desk so she did not feel surrounded by her peers. They took the time to explain things to her thoroughly and showed her cards to help her understand and she began to improve because she was finally getting the support she needed."

Gentle encouragement

Gina started to notice improvements in Leo's behaviour about three or four weeks after she joined St Mary's. "Leo began to enjoy the routine of school and found she liked meeting new children and became better at sitting with her peers. She used to throw things when she first started at the school, but was gradually encouraged to express her feelings in a different way. She learnt to use words to express her emotions and to talk things through with the staff and they taught her how to ask about issues and manage her feelings," Gina says.

Beneficial therapies

"Leo began to realise that she liked to get a good response from the staff and so she stopped trying to challenge authority. The staff helped her with her dexterity and she also benefited from receiving physiotherapy and swimming in the school pool. They supported her with Lego therapy and helped her work through her challenges. The staff were all very attentive to her," Gina says. "Leo started off by taking a packed lunch with her to school, but she eventually said she wanted to try the food cooked by the kitchen staff, which she found was very good."

Home from home

Leo has stayed one night a week at the school's residential provision for the last few years to help develop her social skills. "She has enjoyed getting to know the other residential students and can now hold a very good conversation with people. Now she is in Year 13, having gone right through the school and into the college, she has found she loves Maths and would like to become a teaching assistant and help other children to learn. She now wants to go on to further education when she leaves school," Gina says.

Happy life

"I always trusted St Mary's to help Leo with her issues and I am grateful to the staff for working out how to draw the best out of my daughter. I now have a lot less stress and worry at home. Leo helps me in the house because she has learnt to tidy up and cook now. She enjoys her life and she gives joy to others. I am very proud of her and of what she has become."

Leo says: "I love my school and I enjoy learning and spending time there with my friends."



Curriculum: creative, flexible and engaging

School Structure

The School at St Mary's is for pupils in Key Stages 1, 2, 3 and 4 and the College is for those in Key Stage 5. At St Mary's our pupils/students follow the National Curriculum which is differentiated according to the individual needs of each child.

Broadening horizons and opportunities

We support pupils/students' personal social and moral learning and development through our curriculum opportunities. This helps all of our pupils/students to develop their sense of self and their wellbeing, as well as to broaden their horizons and opportunities. Fundamentally, there is an emphasis on developing communication, literacy and mathematical skills in a functional way as well as to enable pupils/students to achieve formal accreditation. Developing our pupils/students communication and social skills enables them to learn how to make and sustain friendships and form positive relationships. This is central to our work at St Mary's.



Key Stage 1

St Mary's has been granted permission to extend the age range of pupils for which it is registered. From September 2023 we will admit pupils into key stage 1, we have developed a specialist facility to accommodate our pupils safely and appropriately. Our specialist staff will plan individual programmes within the school curriculum, in order to support personal development and learning, through a recognisable Key Stage 1 model that is adapted to meet the needs of our youngest pupils.

Key Stage 2

Key Stage 2 is delivered through a recognisable junior school approach, meaning that there is a small consistent team within each class and that core learning is delivered within a KS2 classroom to avoid transitions and unnecessary movement around the school. We make use of the School's specialist areas such as Art, Food Technology and Computing in order to support teaching and learning. Our aim is to ensure that as pupils leave KS2 they have the independence, communication and learning skills to fully access the secondary curriculum as they move onwards through the school.

Key Stage 3

The Key Stage 3 curriculum is delivered through a mixed junior and secondary style approach. Although a number of lessons are offered within their own classroom, pupils move with their class and their Teaching Assistants to Specialist Teachers who deliver the curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to take greater ownership of their own learning and they are supported to develop the organisational skills and flexibility which they need to be able to be independent young adults.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4 students follow accredited courses, including GCSEs and BTECs, which meet their ability levels and are matched to their future aspirations. Pupils/Students build on their prior experiences at KS3 and continue to consider what future employment and leisure activities they might wish to explore or follow in adult life, so that they can develop the skills they need to pursue these ambitions. Students in Key Stage 4 experience a working environment in real life work place experiences and learn about employability when exploring work related learning.

Key Stage 5 (College, ages 16-19)

Our College is in a separate, modern building on our main site. College students are increasingly independent and confident. Students have the opportunity to choose subjects they wish to study for GCSEs. Students will leave us with a range of BTEC, as well as GCSEs. An important part of our curriculum in Key Stage 5 is developing work skills, leading to work experience opportunities.



St Mary's College

In our 6th Form College, students become increasingly independent and confident whilst continuing to develop communication, literacy and maths skills. We use school facilities (such as the school kitchens) and offsite work experience placements to support our students develop employment skills.



Trips

To enrich the curriculum, we take pupils/students on a wide range of educational, academic and cultural visits linked to their current topics. The pupils/students at St Mary's gain a huge amount from these high quality visits to:

- Historical buildings.
- Places of cultural significance.
- Museums.
- Places where public services are provided to the community.
- And many more...

Residential pupils/students take part in offsite activities during the evenings and weekends.

Transitions

We recognise that any transitions, including starting a new school, a new key stage, a new class can often be very challenging for our pupils/students and sometimes also for their families. By listening to families, we are able to provide the support needed to move to the next stage. We plan transitions carefully so that our pupils/students are as well-equipped and supported as much as possible for their next steps in education, training, employment, independence or onward placement. Transitions are planned on an individual basis to support each pupil/student and their family.



The Residential Experience

Residential Provision

St Mary's has excellent residential facilities. Pupils/ students live in a stimulating and 'homely' environment that promotes personal development and independence. Each living area has a sitting room, kitchen and dining area and also recreation areas, with a TV. Bedrooms are spacious and individual.

Our residential provision supports pupils/students to become more independent across all areas of their development. Through the delivery of our personalised 'waking day' curriculum, each child's personal, social, health and emotional development is supported. Our experienced residential care team includes therapy staff who work with pupils both before and after school to support independent living skills. Staff levels are appropriately high so that individual needs can be well supported, taking account of the age/stage of development for each pupil/student.

Our staff support pupils/students to identify individual targets through a small steps programme. These targets are linked to those described in individual EHC Plans. Our staff also prioritise close working with parents/carers, providing advice and support when required.

We can offer a range of residential opportunities includes weekly boarding to fortnightly boarding. There is capacity within our provision to offer extended day, overnight respite, or short stay opportunities for pupils/ students who attend the school.

Pupils/students work with staff to create activity plans which enable them to enjoy, learn and to make the most of their residential experience. This includes using local facilities such as the nearby beach, parks and countryside, as well as youth clubs, horse riding and other leisure and sporting activities. Pupils/students are also provided with opportunities to utilise the living accommodation for social interaction, quiet individual time or study. Facilities within the main school and college buildings are also available for regular use during the evening, including the swimming pool.

Pupils/students learn to prepare light meals, become more responsible for their self-care and increasingly plan their leisure time. Opportunities for flexibility, autonomy, privacy and participation in decision-making are important aspects of our provision and this in turn enables increased responsibility and self-determination as pupils/students move towards adulthood.



Mia is being helped to achieve her full potential in the calm surroundings of St Mary's School and College

Jackie and Joby live in Battle with their foster daughter, Mia, aged 12, who has global delay and speech issues.

Fantastic progress

Jackie and Joby are delighted with how happy and settled Mia is at St Mary's and how much progress she has made since joining the school. Jackie says: "Mia loves the routine of the school and likes being given her timetable each term, which she has on the wall of her room so she knows what she is doing every day when she gets up. She has made a lot of progress with reading at St Mary's, as she was only reading picture books at her previous school, and we can tell she is making progress with Maths and writing by the work we were shown when we went to her parents' evening."

Good class sizes

Jackie and Joby had looked carefully at secondary schools to find one that would meet Mia's needs as they felt she was not achieving at her mainstream primary school. Jackie says: "We visited two schools with Mia, but we thought St Mary's was by far the best as it had small classes and the atmosphere seemed very calm. When we were taking Mia round the school with us, she was very excited. She loves swimming and so we were pleased St Mary's had its own pool."

Happy at school

Jackie says Mia settled in quickly at her new school. "She is transported to school in a taxi and is the first pick up in the morning and the last drop off in the evening, but she doesn't seem to mind the long day. She always wakes up at the right time and gets herself ready for school and dresses herself in the clothes she needs for what she will be doing that day. She is still happy when she comes home in the evening and is keen to tell us all about her day at school."

Individual targets

Although Mia is behind academically for her age and still has some issues with her speech, she has come on a lot since starting at St Mary's. "She is taught with children at a similar level to her, but each child has their own individual targets. She has benefited from receiving extra help with her speech and language and the staff at St Mary's have all been very understanding about the problems she has had," Jackie says.

Helpful teachers

"Mia enjoys doing extracurricular activities during the last lesson of the day. When she said she wanted to do a kick boxing class, we found one for her out of school, but unfortunately it started too early. However, the school were happy to give me permission pick her up early one day a week to take her to kick boxing instead of doing the extracurricular activity at school. Mia likes singing on a Wednesday and enjoys working outside in the school garden. She loves earning points for good work, which she can spend on treats from the store cupboard. She already knew one child from her previous school, who moved to St Mary's with her, but we can tell she has made lots of new friends by the number of birthday parties she is invited to. We are very happy with all the help the staff at St Mary's are giving Mia and we are pleased that we chose the school."

Mia says: "I love going to St Mary's and I enjoy swimming in the pool at school."



Therapy and Individual Support

Therapy, Health and Personal Development

Our onsite therapy and health professionals work in partnership with our education and residential staff to provide integrated support and intervention to the pupils/students at St Mary's. This allows us to ensure that their health and personal development is exceptionally well supported. Our therapists work throughout the school and college and within the residential houses and they also support our pupils/students in the community to facilitate learning, develop their social and emotional skills and to promote independence and build resilience. Therapists provide in-depth assessment, individual therapy programmes, small group therapy sessions, assistance in the classroom to support access to learning and also residential support. The Therapy teams work collaboratively with staff and parents/carers to develop our pupils/students skills which will support them in adulthood.

All therapists are registered with the Health Care Professional Council (HCPC)

Onsite Therapy services and facilities at St Mary's

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Sign Supported English (SSE) trained staff
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Educational Psychology
- School Nurse
- Music Therapy
- Swimming Pool
- Circuits Room
- Physiotherapy gym
- Sensory integration suite
- Sensory Room

Speech and Language

Our onsite Speech and Language team support pupils/students. We take a Total Communication approach to enabling our pupils to communicate.

Speech and Language at St Mary's

The Speech and Language Therapy team consists of Speech and Language Therapists and Speech and Language Therapy Assistants. All of our Speech and Language Therapists are HCPC and RCSLT registered and offer a high level of expertise in working with communication disorders within the context of a complex range of needs. The team supports the assessment, diagnosis and management of speech, language and communication needs; social skills and pragmatic language development, and eating and drinking difficulties. The Speech and Language Therapy team is based on-site and interdisciplinary working is a core part of our provision. We provide advice and work collaboratively with colleagues including teachers, residential staff, Occupational Therapists and parents/carers. This allows us to support and extend speech, language and social communication skills in the classroom, community, and other settings.

The Speech and Language Therapy team have a range of specialist qualifications, knowledge and experience in areas and approaches including: Autistic Spectrum Disorders; Developmental Verbal Dyspraxia; Hearing Impairment; Developmental Language Disorder (Specific Language Impairment); Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC); Talking Mats; transition; software and apps; building language through Lego; Social Stories; social language use; Dysfluency; and Dysphagia.

We also have specific experience of working with pupils/students with Worster Drought, Di George Syndrome, Down's syndrome, Tuberous sclerosis, Prader-Willi and Pathological Demand Avoidance.

Total Communication

St Mary's advocates a Total Communication approach. This involves the use of verbal strategies and Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). A range of methods can be employed as part of a Total Communication approach, including: facial expression, gesture and pantomime; voice and speech; drawing and writing; signing (at St Mary's all staff and pupils/students are taught Sign Supported English); low technology aids e.g. Symbol books/PECS; high technology aids including tablets and speech apps.

Signing is used to reinforce concepts and vocabulary, and to support processing, learning and retention. For those pupils/students who require (AAC) systems we are able to offer specialist assessment and ongoing support. Systems used may range from personalised communication books to hi-tech voice-output technology. A wide range of resources using picture communication symbols are also used throughout the day to support communication, learning and independence. We have created 20 Sign Language videos for you to view on our YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcDQAsiK6AAb5sk60QDKLAg/videos>



Lenny has become more confident and is getting the benefit of therapy on site in the friendly surroundings of St Mary's School and College

Rachel and Darren live in Bodiam with their children, Michael, aged 19, Gracie, aged 15, and twins, Archie, and Lenny, aged 13. Lenny has global development delay and cerebral palsy and has attended St Mary's School since he was 11.

Joining in

Rachel and Darren have had great pleasure watching Lenny become a lot more confident and make friends since starting at St Mary's School and College in Year Seven. Rachel says: "Lenny is now thriving in the inclusive atmosphere at St Mary's and has come out of his shell and will join in with things. He is benefiting from being able to have all the therapy he needs at the school and is finally making some academic progress."

Language support

Lenny had attended a mainstream primary school so he could be with his twin brother, Archie, but his complex needs made it impossible for him to go on to secondary school with his twin. Rachel says: "We chose St Mary's because we felt they could cope with all his needs, which include physical disability as well as speech and language issues. Lenny's speech is quite difficult for other people to understand but now he is at St Mary's he is able to have expert help at the school."

Caring staff

Rachel says when Lenny was at his mainstream school, he was put in a special needs unit with other children with disabilities, but most of them were younger than him so he did not make any friends. "At St Mary's, he is in a small class with ten other children and he has now been able to make some friends. It takes Lenny a long time to process things and the staff remind the other children to be patient with him. Therefore, he is flourishing because he is in a more understanding and caring environment."

Swimming therapy

Everything is geared to Lenny's individual needs now and if the staff at St Mary's pick up on things and suggest changes to his therapy, the changes can be implemented straight away, Rachel says. "Before when he was having NHS treatment, he would have to wait several months for any changes suggested by his therapist, so it is of huge benefit to him to be able to have speech therapy, physiotherapy, and occupational therapy all in one place. Lenny enjoys going in the swimming pool at the school and because of his individual needs can access it four times a week."

Accessible garden

"Lenny also enjoys gardening club and can participate from his wheelchair because the school have put in raised beds in the garden. He can now follow the academic curriculum because the school have made adaptations for him and so he is finally making progress, whereas he would have struggled academically if he had gone to a mainstream secondary school," Rachel says.

Happy at school

"We live so far from St Mary's that Lenny had to have transport to get him to the school when he first started. "He did not cope well with the long days because he was picked up early in the morning and dropped off last in the evening. I was a TA at another special needs school at the time, but a year after Lenny started, I applied for a post to

be a TA in the College at St Mary's and was successful. I can now take him to school and pick him up every day which is a big help. St Mary's is a lovely place to work and everyone is very friendly and supportive."

Lenny says: "I enjoy gardening and swimming at school."



Your child’s achievements

How will I know how my child is doing?

We give our pupils/students regular feedback on their learning so that they understand what it is that they need to do better. This allows us to base our lesson plans on a detailed knowledge of each pupil/student. We also give parents/carers regular updates on their child’s progress so that teachers, pupils/students, parents/ carers are all working together to raise attainment and achievement.

Annual Review

Parents/Carers are invited to take part in their child’s Annual Review when we discuss their progress towards EHCP outcomes and set targets for the following year. Your child is always invited to take part in this meeting.

Parent/Carer evenings

We have two parent/carer evenings each year when parents/carers have the opportunity to meet with staff and view some of their child’s work.



Kianush has greatly improved his speech and communication skills thanks to the supportive staff at St Mary’s School and College

Melanie lives in Kent with her daughter, Daria, aged 18, and son, Kianush, aged 11. Kianush who has autism and communication issues, is a residential pupil at St Mary’s School and College.

Valuable therapy

Melanie will always be grateful to the staff at St Mary’s for everything they have done to help Kianush. She says: “Kianush was non-verbal and started having speech therapy when he was four. There was a time when I thought he would never speak, but then he started making sounds. Since he has been at St Mary’s, his speech has improved massively. He has individual speech therapy and occupational therapy once a week and support with his speech, language and communication skills is integrated into his educational plan.”

Excellent progress

Each time Kianush comes home to stay, Melanie is amazed by the progress he has made. “He is much calmer now and when I don’t understand something he has said, he will type it for me. His reading is rapidly improving, and he is learning new words and ways of expressing himself from books. He also enjoys Science and Maths and I am told his concentration has improved.”

Communication specialists

Melanie was keen to find the right school for Kianush and did a lot of research before she chose St Mary’s. “I thought St Mary’s would be the best place for him after I had looked round and formed a good impression of the school and I was confident they would be able to help him with his speech and language needs.”

Happy at school

Kianush was eight years old when he started as a residential pupil at St Mary’s. “I was very nervous when he first went away, although I knew a residential place was right for him as he needed round the clock support. He settled in well and although the staff told me he was homesick at the beginning, he soon began to thrive there,” Melanie says.

Working together

“He had an amazing TA helping him during the day and a good key worker looking after him after school. The school and the residential staff work together well and he has help with his communication skills day and night. I am in touch regularly with his therapists, who share their objectives with me and ask for my input. I get a weekly report from both the classroom and his residential provision. I can contact them with any questions I have and they will send me pictures of him doing activities,” she says.

Enjoying conversations

“In the past, when Kianush tried to say something, if I did not understand him, he was very resourceful and would use gestures as well, but we could never have a proper conversation. Now his speech is better, we can talk to each other and he will make jokes and show that he has a good sense of humour,” Melanie says.

Mixing well

“Kianush has learnt how to swim since starting at St Mary’s and loves going in their pool. When we went on holiday, I was amazed what a good swimmer he was. He also loves

gardening and growing things at school. He likes the company of other children now and he has some good friends. He has learnt life skills at school, which he also uses at home, such as setting the table, making the bed, taking out the rubbish and loading and unloading the washing machine and dish washer. I can’t thank St Mary’s enough for all the support they have given Kianush.”

Kianush says he enjoys going on outings to golf, museums, the beach, or shops, and likes swimming in the pool.



Admissions

The best way to find out if St Mary's is right for you and your child is to come and visit us. This way you can see for yourself pupils/students engaged in their learning, the facilities we have to offer and meet the people who will be working with you and your child.



Our admissions process:

Stage 1 = Initial Enquiry: Please call Administration on 01424 730 740, or email us admin@stmarysbexhill.org

Stage 2 = A member of our administration team will contact you and confirm a mutually convenient date to visit the School.

Stage 3 = Informal visit. This is an opportunity for you to see what St Mary's can offer.

Stage 4 = A Taster visit. These sessions will be bespoke to your child and may involve a day, a series of sessions or a number of day visits. Where appropriate it may include an extended day or overnight stay in our residential facility.

Stage 5 = If we feel that we can meet your child's needs we will inform you and your Local Authority.



What can you expect on your visit?

You will be met by our Assistant Principal, who will accompany you during your visit. Our Assistant Principal will help you find all the information that you need to be able to make the important decision about whether the school is right for your child. During your visit, you will have an opportunity to talk to a variety of staff and to see first-hand what we can offer.



What next?

After your visit, if it is appropriate, the Assistant Principal will discuss and arrange a Taster visit for your child.

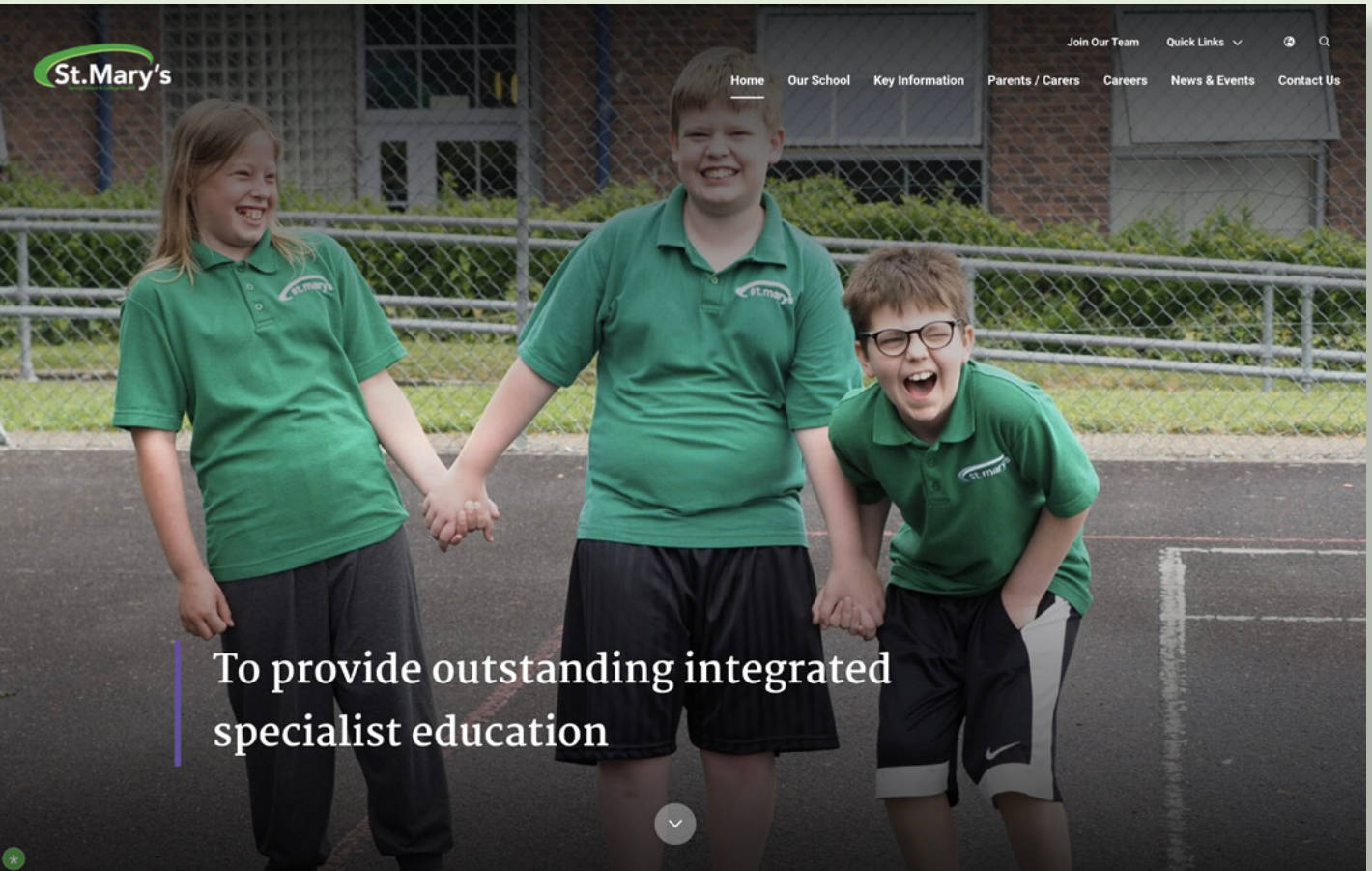
The Taster Visit/Day:

Your child will be placed in the most appropriate class and if required, a residential setting. During the day your child will follow the timetable for their identified class and attend lessons. Their presentation will help inform everyone in their decision making. We will be making assessments and gathering information to inform our decision in relation to how appropriate a placement at St Mary's would be.

A decision based on the child's EHCP and any supporting reports as well as the Taster Day will be made by the Senior Team as to whether we feel that St Mary's can meet the needs of your child.

This decision is communicated to yourself and where appropriate, your Local Authority.

If you wish to take up a placement, your Local Authority will also need to make a decision as to whether they feel that the school is an appropriate placement. We will of course be able to discuss this process with you further during your initial visit.



Onsite Therapy services and facilities at St Mary's:

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Sign Supported English (SSE) trained staff
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physiotherapy (PT)
- Educational Psychology
- School Nurse
- Swimming pool
- Physiotherapy gym
- Sensory integration suite
- Sensory Room

A great source of information to help answer any questions you may have about St Mary's School and college is on our website: www.stmarysbexhill.org Here you will find a wealth of useful information including school policies, curriculum information, admissions information, helpful documents about the therapies we provide, our residential provision and plenty more! We do appreciate that a conversation would sometimes be the most helpful way to answer your questions. If this is the case, please do contact us on 01424 730740 or at admin@stmarysbexhill.org.

St Mary's Vision and Values

Our Purpose

To provide outstanding integrated specialist education, therapy and residential care for pupils/students with speech, language and communication needs and learning difficulties.

Our Vision and Values

At St Mary's we provide a positive environment for learning in which all children and young people can feel safe, secure and supported in their learning and development. However significant their needs are, all children and young people have the right to be fully included in their learning experiences.

All children and young people should be able to make the most of opportunities to develop their potential and to prepare for life beyond school and college. All adults at St Mary's provide the highest quality support in order to maximise opportunities for learning at all times. All learning will be accessible, stimulating, motivating, challenging and enjoyable. Our values are crucial in supporting this vision:

- Promote independence and preparation for life after school.
- Promote inclusion and equality of opportunity.
- Provide accessible, meaningful and challenging activities to promote learning and personal development.
- Promote opportunities to learn about and practice empathy, respect, kindness, trust and collaborative working.
- Provide opportunities to develop self-esteem and self-worth.
- Develop moral, spiritual and cultural awareness.
- Provide a caring, supportive, safe and stable learning environment.
- Work effectively as a staff team, constantly striving for improvement.
- Celebrate achievements in all aspects of development.
- Provide pupils/students with opportunities to fulfil their potential.
- Promote enjoyment and pride in learning and achieving.
- Clearly share our values with parents, carers and other stakeholders.
- Manage our resources effectively to ensure maximum benefit to learners.

