



Special Educational Needs

A Guide for Parents and Carers

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1 Recent Changes

Legislation (The Children and Families Act 2014) enacted on the 13th March 2014 came into force from the 1st September 2014. A new SEND Code of Practice also accompanies this legislation.

More details about the reforms and the SEND Code of Practice can be found on the Department for Education's website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/special-educational-needs-sen-code-of-practice-and-regulations>

One significant change arising from the reforms is that Statements of Special Educational Needs, for those children with the most complex needs, have now been replaced with a new Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. These plans are being supported by an Education, Health and Care Plan Pathway. You can view an animation describing this new pathway on Nottinghamshire's SEND Local Offer website:

<http://www.nottinghamshire.sendlocaloffer.org.uk>

This information is also available by putting the above web address into the browser of a smart phone or tablet.

The SEND Local Offer is a resource which is designed to support children and young people with SEND and / or disabilities and their families. It describes the services and provision that are available both to those families in Nottinghamshire that have an Education, Health and Care Plan and those who do not have a plan, but still experience some form of SEND. The SEND Local Offer includes information about public services across education, health and social care, as well as those provided by the private, voluntary and community sectors.

Information can also be obtained from the Nottinghamshire Ask Us Service on:

0800 121 7772

or by speaking to the Integrated Children's Disability Service on:

0115 8041275

2 What does 'Special Educational Needs' mean?

The term Special Educational Needs has a legal definition which is set out in the Education Act 1996 and the Children and Families Act 2014.

A child has Special Educational Needs if he / she has learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for him / her to learn than most other children of about the same age. Some children may have a temporary difficulty with, for example, early skills, reading, number work or behaviour, which can, with the help of Parents / Carers and school, be overcome. Quite a lot of children have difficulties at some time during their education.

Children and young people who have Special Educational Needs do not necessarily have a disability and many disabled children and young people do not have Special Educational Needs.

There is a wide range of Special Educational Needs for which children may need extra support. Sometimes these needs are only short term, others may continue through a child's life and some children may have a specific diagnosis. The needs generally fall into one or more of the following categories:

- Learning difficulties – in acquiring basic skills in school
- Emotional and behavioural difficulties – making friends or relating to adults or behaving properly in school
- Specific learning difficulty – with reading, writing, number work or understanding information
- Sensory or physical needs - such as hearing or visual impairment, which might affect them in school
- Communication difficulties – in expressing themselves or understanding what others are saying
- Medical or health conditions – which may slow down a child's progress and / or involves treatment that affects his or her education

3 Some Possible Questions You May Have

3.1 How do I know if my child has Special Educational Needs *and / or Disabilities*?

In some cases, for example if a child has physical / medical difficulty, a genetic condition or moderate to severe autism, it is likely that the child

would have a diagnosis and a plan in place to support them with their learning before they started school, as a diagnosis would have taken place when they were younger.

For other Special Educational Needs, particularly for those children with mild autistic spectrum conditions, behavioural difficulties or specific learning difficulties, the signs that a child is finding learning difficult are not as clear and so they may not be identified until well into their schooling.

Signs that a child might have a Special Educational Need and / or Disability could be if they have difficulty with one or more of the following:

- All school work
- Specific areas of school work such as reading, writing, numeracy, understanding or processing information
- Self-expression or expressing and understanding what others are saying
- Listening or paying attention
- Establishing relationships, making friends or relating to adults
- Behaving appropriately in or out of school
- Personal organisation
- Motor skills may be impaired or slow
- Sensory or physical needs

Not all Special Educational Needs are easy to spot; some youngsters develop coping strategies to mask their difficulties – they use common sense, quick-wittedness, intelligence and other virtues to disguise the effects of a Special Educational Need.

If you are concerned about an area of your child's learning, please speak to either their class teacher or **Zoe Poppleton (Brookside Primary School's SENCo)**. Equally, if the class teacher has a concern with your child's learning, the teacher (and possibly the SENCo) will invite you into school to discuss their concerns and a course of action will be decided.

3.2 What will happen if my Child has SEND?

Depending on the difficulties your child has, the school will support your child in one of the following ways:

1. Concern

If the school has a concern about your child's learning, behaviour, communication or physical development, the class teacher will inform the SENCo of the concerns and speak to you, the Parents / Carers, about the concerns. The class teacher will then put some measures into place (e.g. extra reading support) to help your child with their area of need and monitor their progress over one to two terms.

2. SEND Vulnerable

If your child has made slower than expected progress with the concern described above, or your child is seen to have clear difficulties with an area of learning, the class teacher will arrange a meeting with you to discuss a plan of individual support to help the child through 1:1 and small group interventions. The class teacher will remain responsible for planning and delivering individualised programmes. You will be closely informed of the action and results at structured conversation meeting which are held twice a year (details below).

3. SEND Support

If your child needs a considerable amount of individual support to help them make progress (several hours of 1:1 support a week) and / or an external agency is involved in supporting your child (for example, an educational psychologist), the plan to support the child will be agreed between the child's Parents / Carers, the class teacher, the SENCo and an agencies involved. A Parent Review Meeting will occur at the start of each term where those involved discuss progress and next steps in helping the child. You will be given a copy of the agreed support and targets for your child.

4. Education, Health and Care Plan

Very few children will need an Education, Health and Care Plan and these are currently being brought in to replace the old Statements. For more details on the current changes, please visit the Nottinghamshire County Council website:

3.3 Is there any extra funding for my child if they have SEN?

The majority of children's needs will be met in the normal classroom setting without the need for additional funding. However, for a few children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities, extra funding and support will be needed:

- **ASN Funding** (Additional School Need) – Some children will need additional support other than that normally provided by the classroom teacher. This funding comes directly into the school's budget. A child can have up to 9.5 hours of additional support through ASN Funding, usually provided by the class teacher and / or a teaching assistant.
- **AFN Funding** (Additional Family Need) – A few children may need more than 9.5 hours of support a week or may have a specific diagnosis that requires additional help. This funding goes to the Family of Schools and the SENCo has to put in a bid to the family to access this funding. The bids are moderated and, if granted, the funding will be given at a low, medium or high level. The funding pays for additional support for the child, courses for staff to go on to support the child and planning time to create specialised resources for the child.
- **HLN funding** (Higher Level Need) – Occasionally a child may have complex or more severe needs which require more consistent adult support to access the curriculum. This funding has to be applied for through the Local Authority.

4 Terms Explained

4.1 What is a SENCo?

SENCo stands for "Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator". A SENCo is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's Special Educational Needs Policy and keeping an overview of special needs provision in school. All mainstream schools must appoint a teacher to be their SENCo

The SENCo will co-ordinate additional support for pupils with Special Educational Needs and liaise with their parents, teachers and other professionals who are involved with them. The SENCo has

responsibility for requesting the involvement of an Educational Psychologist and other external services.

4.2 What is a Family of Schools SEND Group?

The East Leake Academy Family of Schools SEND Group are:

- Brookside Primary School
- Lantern Lane Primary School
- Costock Primary School
- Normanton Primary School
- Sutton Bonington Primary School
- Gotham Primary School
- East Leake Academy

The SENCOs from each school meet once or twice a term and hold meetings led by the Family SENCO (currently **Sarah Magirr at Gotham**). At the meetings we support each other, share training and prioritise what needs to be done for children in each school who have Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities.

4.3 What is a Springboard Meeting?

Springboard meetings happen once a term between the Family of Schools. Children who have complex needs are discussed at the meeting to ensure the correct support service is in place for them. A request can be made for a service like the Educational Psychologist or the Schools and Families Specialist Services to become involved in supporting the school with the child's needs. A child can only be discussed at Springboard with the consent of the parents (this only needs to be given once, not for every meeting).

4.4 What is a Teaching Assistant?

A Teaching Assistant works alongside the class teacher and supports groups of children and individuals to access the curriculum and reach their targets. Teaching Assistants can work both within the classroom or quiet areas outside the room depending on the activity.

4.5 What is a Parent Review Meeting?

A Parent Review Meeting happens when a child is on the SEND register. A meeting is booked near the start of each new term between the Parents / Carers, the class teacher, the SENCo, any agencies involved and, where appropriate, the child. At the meeting the child's progress is reviewed and new targets are set for the child with all agencies, the school and the Parents / Carers contributing towards the actions needed for the child.

4.6 What is an Educational Psychologist (ESP Service)?

An Educational Psychologist is a person trained to make judgements on children's educational development. They work in a number of schools and have an overview of the needs of local children. If an Educational Psychologist needs to be involved with your child, the school will arrange this. Currently, our **Educational Psychologist is Fiona Clavin.**

4.7 What is a Learning Support Teacher (SFSS)?

The Schools and Families Specialist Services is a team of experienced teachers who we can ask for advice and help. They work in a number of schools and also offer training to staff. If a member of SFSS needs to be involved with your child, school will arrange this.

4.8 What is a Behaviour Support Teacher?

The Rushcliffe Primary Behaviour Partnership is a team of experienced teachers trained to support children who are having behavioural difficulties. They advise teachers, Headteachers and sometimes Parents / Carers on how to support the child. If a Behavioural Support Teacher needs to be involved with your child, school will arrange this. Currently, our **Behavioural Support Teachers are Carol Ward, Caroline Pywell and Caroline Graham.**

4.9 What is the Ask Us Nottinghamshire?

Ask Us Nottinghamshire is an organisation which offers support and advice to parents of children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities. They can be contacted directly by Parents / Carers on 0800 121 7772.