

# Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or Disabilities (D) & Inclusion

At West Melton Primary School, we are committed to offering an inclusive curriculum to ensure the best possible progress for all of our pupils whatever their needs or abilities. Our educational aims for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are the same as those for all children in the school.

## What are special educational needs?

If your child has more difficulties than most children their age with aspects of their learning, communication or behaviour, they are likely to benefit from additional support in school which will enable them to access the curriculum at their level.

Good special needs practice is good practice for all pupils, which is of utmost importance as any pupil may encounter difficulties at some stage in their school lives.

Within school, this means that they will be identified on the school's special educational needs register so that provision to meet their needs can be planned for.

Sometimes parents/carers can be concerned about their child being added to this register; please do not be. It is simply a record of which children require additional support and allows the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately and to enable support to be sought for your child from additional outside agencies, such as an Educational Psychologist, Child & Family Support Worker or Speech & Language Therapist.

As children progress, they may be taken off of the register at a future point when their needs no longer require additional support.

Children are not regarded as having a learning difficulty solely because the language or form of language of their home is different from the language in which they will be taught.

## What is a disability?

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse affect on his or her ability to carry out normal, day to day activities.

Children with a disability have special educational needs if they have any difficulty in accessing education and if they need any special educational provision to be made for them, that is anything that is additional to or different from what is normally available in school.

## **What needs do we have experience of supporting at our school?**

West Melton Primary School is a mainstream school with experience of supporting pupils with a range of differing needs including learning difficulties, emotional behavioural and social difficulties, physical difficulties, sensory impairments, speech, language and communication difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, medical difficulties and other difficulties or disabilities. We do not have a special unit for any type of special educational need or disability.

All the teachers in our school are teachers of children with special educational needs. As such, West Melton Primary School adopts a 'whole school approach' to special educational needs which involves all the staff adhering to a model of good practice. The staff of the school are committed to identifying and providing for the needs of all children in a wholly inclusive environment. Inclusion is regarded as crucial to the policy, in line with that of the Local Authority. This means that all children with SEND are taught together with their peers for the majority of the time, being withdrawn for short periods only when specialist provision cannot be incorporated in any other way due to practical considerations for the child and the class as a whole.

## **The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo)**

All mainstream schools must appoint a designated teacher; the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy. He or she will co-ordinate provision for pupils with SEND and liaise with parents, staff and external agencies.

The named SENCo for West Melton Primary School is Mrs Gaunt.

## **Individual Education Plans (IEPs)**

The IEP highlights the teacher's main areas of concern for the child, the child's strengths which can be used to overcome difficulties and the support to be provided. Targets are included which promote learning in small achievable steps, with details about strategies to be employed to enable this to happen and details about the people who will be involved in helping this to happen. Usually these people would include the teacher, the parent and/or a member of the school's SEN team.

## **Relationships with Parents/Carers**

We recognise the value of parents/carers knowledge of their children and will seek to use that information in planning support for pupils. Parents/carers are encouraged to be fully involved with their child's educational provision, so that a collaborative problem solving approach can be implemented.

Class Teachers will meet with parents/carers termly to discuss a child's progress and individual education plan (IEP).

Throughout all stages of support, parents/carers are kept informed. Their permission is sought for movement between stages and their agreement of the targets on the IEP is made by a signature on the IEP form. They are given copies of IEP forms as they are initiated and upon completion of each one.

The SENCo will contact parents to discuss referrals to outside agencies, such as the Speech & Language Therapy, Educational Psychology etc. Parental permission is always sought before any referral is made.

We encourage parents to discuss any concerns that they may have about their child's needs. This is usually initially with the Class Teacher, although parents can also make an appointment to meet with the SENCo directly.

Parents are always welcomed into the school and are a highly valued group of people.

## **Access to the Curriculum**

All children are entitled to a balanced and broadly based curriculum including the Early Years Foundation Stage and National Curriculum in line with the school's policy of inclusion. Where pupils have special educational needs and/or

disabilities, a graduated response will be adopted. The school will, in other than exceptional cases, make full use of classroom and school resources before drawing on external support.

It is desirable to work with children with SEND in the classroom and to enable them to access the full curriculum at their level through differentiation and by supporting their learning alongside the class teacher and with the rest of the class. Sometimes children benefit from a period of time of individual attention/small group attention, external to the classroom, to address specific skills to enable them to access the curriculum more fully. Children are then withdrawn into a specialist group teaching room and given 1:1 or small group support in a quiet atmosphere, without distractions from others around them.

All children are encouraged to talk about how they feel about their learning and their progress and are encouraged to feel able to 'have a go' to take charge of their own learning. The rest of the class are encouraged to be supportive to SEND/all children by encouraging and helping each other to tackle tasks and to join in with the praise and encouragement given by the teacher which are fundamental to this process.

There will be flexible grouping of pupils so that learning needs may be met in individual, small group or whole class contexts. The curriculum will be differentiated to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teaching styles and flexible groups will reflect this approach.

**A child's special educational needs and/or disabilities will be met at one of the following stages:**

## **Initial Concern/Monitoring**

An informal stage where class teachers identify a concern about a pupil's progress, gather available information about the pupil, discuss strategies for providing appropriate learning tasks for the pupil with the SENCo and seek to discuss concerns with the pupil's parents/carers.

## **Informal**

This is the first formal stage. The triggers for intervention through School/Early Years Action could be the teacher's or others' concern, underpinned by evidence, about a child who, despite receiving differentiated learning opportunities

- makes little or no progress even when teaching approaches are targeted particularly in a child's identified area of weakness.
- shows signs of difficulty in developing literacy or numeracy skills which result in poor attainment in some curriculum areas.
- presents persistent emotional or behavioural difficulties which are not ameliorated by the behaviour management techniques usually employed by the school.
- has sensory or physical problems, and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of specialist equipment.
- has communication and/or interaction difficulties and continues to make little or no progress despite the provision of a differentiated curriculum.

Provision is mainly classroom based, managed by the Class Teacher, where:

- an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is drawn up for the pupil, in consultation with the pupil's parents/carers and advice from the school's SEND team, including the SENCo.
- progress is reviewed on at least a termly basis.
- at the termly IEP review, decisions are made about future provision. These may be to move back to Monitoring where the class teacher will continue to monitor to check progress is continuing to be made appropriately, or to continue at Informal stage with new IEP targets to be achieved.
- the majority of support is provided in class by the Class Teacher and LSA, but there may be some low-level involvement from the school's SEN team.

## Formal Stage

If, despite significant support and intervention at Informal Stage, the school has evidence that a pupil is making insufficient progress, or if the SENCo believes the nature of the pupil's difficulties requires it, we may seek further advice and support from external professionals. The criteria for formal stage are set by the Local Authority.

The triggers for Formal stage could be that, despite having received an individualised programme and/or concentrated support under Informal stage, the child:

- continues to make little or no progress in specific areas over a long period
- continues working at National Curriculum levels substantially below that expected of children of a similar age

- continues to have difficulty developing literacy and numeracy skills
- has emotional and behavioural difficulties which substantially and regularly interfere with the child's own learning or that of the class group, despite having an individualised behaviour management programme
- has sensory or physical needs, and requires additional specialist equipment or regular advice or visits by a specialist service
- has ongoing communication or interaction difficulties that impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning

Provision is still mainly classroom based, with additional advice/input from the SENCo and support from members of the school's SEN Team, where the school will:

- seek the involvement of external agencies to support the production of an IEP for the pupil or to provide a course of support which is carried out in school in a small group situation or a 1:1 basis.
- continue to work closely with parents.
- continue to keep the pupil's progress under regular review.

Reviews are carried out as before and decisions made with the parents as to whether to continue the child at Formal stage or if some progress is being made which shows the child is improving significantly, or to be put forward a request for the consideration of the initiation of statutory assessment if everything that has been tried so far does not seem to be making sufficient difference to the child's situation and development.

The criteria for applying for statutory assessment are set by the Local Authority. The school's Educational Psychologist must be in agreement with any application for statutory assessment.

### **Request for the consideration of the initiation of statutory assessment**

The school will use reports from all of the professionals involved with the child to complete the statutory forms. All of these reports are then submitted to the Local Authority's SEN Panel where it will be decided whether a statutory assessment will be granted.

Parents'/carers' views and feelings are sought throughout this process.

If a statutory assessment is granted, then the Local Authority's SEN Panel will request detailed reports from all of the professionals involved about the child's development, progress and the difficulties being experienced, with details of what has been provided to support the child up to this stage.

If the SEN Panel are in agreement, an Education, Health and Care Plan will be drawn up, which will detail the child's specific special educational needs and required provision. This will also detail any additional funding which is being provided to the school and how this must be used as well as detailing the school placement for the child.

The SEN Panel may make a recommendation as part of the process as to the best placement of the child in light of their special educational needs.

It must be pointed out to parents that not all requests for a statement are successful and that this will be up to the Local Authority SEN Panel.

Where an Education, Health and Care plan is not issued, the school will continue to provide support for that child at Formal stage and decisions will be made about gathering evidence for a further request to be made if this is deemed appropriate/necessary.

Whilst the LA makes its decision about whether a statutory assessment is necessary, and whilst any subsequent assessment is being made, the child continues to be supported at School on the formal stage.

## **Education, Health and Care Plan**

The production of a Education, Health and Care Plan is organised by Rotherham Borough Council in close liaison with the school, external agencies involved with the pupil and the pupil's parents/carers.

The provision set out in a pupil's plan will be closely monitored by the SENCo and reviewed annually. Parents/carers will be invited to contribute to the review and attend the review meeting.

If a pupil makes sufficient progress, a plan may be discontinued by the Local Authority.

## **Our School's SEN Team**

The school's team of educational support staff support children's learning both in class as well as through specific intervention groups. This team is led and managed by the SENCo.

## **Teaching Assistants (TAs)**

Our team of TAs work mainly within class based Phonics, Reciprocal Reading, Literacy and Numeracy sessions, supporting identified children. This enables us to offer small group support to those children with higher levels of need at School Action and School Action Plus. Their work is carried out under the direction of the class teacher, SENCo and/or external agencies.

Intervention groups include a wide range of intervention programmes including talking partners, our own school programmes for supporting Reading, Writing and Maths development

## **Speech & Language Therapist**

We employ a Speech and Language Therapist for one day a week who works with children either on an individual basis or in a small group. They meet with identified children weekly, with significant liaison with parents/ carers, the class teacher and the SENCo.

## **External Support Agencies and Teachers**

External support services play an important part in helping the school identify, assess and make provision for pupils with special education needs, e.g.

- The school receives regular visits from the nominated Local Authority School Borough Attendance Service and Educational Psychology Service. The Educational Psychologist has a set amount of time which they can give to the school and they work with the SENCo to prioritise the children to be seen for observations and assessments each term, in order to give insight into the best way forward for supporting these children.
- In addition the school may seek advice from the borough's specialist advisory teaching services for children with learning difficulties (Learning Support Team), language and communication difficulties (Language & Communication Support Service), behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (Behaviour Support Team), sensory impairments (Sensory Impairment Service) and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) (ASD Service).

All these agencies offer meeting times with parents to explain their involvement with the children.

### **Links with Health Services, Educational Welfare Services and Voluntary Organisations**

The School Nurse makes regular visits to school to carry out health assessments and is always at the end of the phone to offer advice and find out information whenever needed.

Social Services become involved if a referral is made to them with concerns about a child or they sometimes notify the school of concerns raised by another external agency.

Parents are always welcomed into the school and are a highly valued group of people.

## **Assessment**

The SENCo will refer pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to the Learning Support Service, Speech, Language & Communication Needs Service, Sensory Impairment Services, Autistic Spectrum Disorder Service, Behaviour Support Service, the Educational Psychology Service, Community Paediatrician, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or other relevant external agencies, as appropriate, using the individual referral criteria for each agency. Such referrals will always be first agreed with parents/carers.

## **Allocation of Resources**

Resources are allocated in light of our principles of early identification and intervention. Priorities are constantly being updated as it is of the utmost importance to address needs immediately and to prevent them from escalating into something more serious, whilst ensuring the balance of equal opportunities is maintained.

## **The School Building**

The school complies with the Disability Discrimination Act, through ensuring equal access to both the school's buildings and curriculum. At present there is wheelchair access to all buildings, except to one hut. The school also has an

induction loop system fitted to the Central Hall and Main School Office. The curricular provision also takes account of children's individual needs.

## **Admission & Inclusion Arrangements**

The school's admissions criteria does not discriminate against pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities, and its admissions policy has due regard for the guidance in the Code of Practice which accompany the SEN and Disability Act 2001

The borough policy offers school places as a first priority to children with exceptional medical or social needs. Such needs have to be supported by an appropriate agency. There will be close liaison between all relevant parties involved in these situations.

Children with physical disability will be admitted provided the school facilities are sufficient at that time to allow full access to all areas necessary for that child's education to be fully provided. Parents or carers seeking the admission of a pupil with mobility difficulties are advised to approach the school well in advance so that consultations can take place.

## **Contact Details**

For further information about provision for pupils with SEND, please contact the SENCo, Mrs. K Gaunt.