

Ashwell Primary School SEND Information Report



October 2024

Welcome to our SEND Information Report. On these pages you should be able to find the answers for many frequently asked questions relating to what we offer children in our school who have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). If you do not find what you are looking for then please ask us. If you have any suggestions or comments then please let us know!

Your child's class teacher is the first port of call should you have any concerns regarding your child's special educational needs or disabilities. Our school Inclusion Lead (and Deputy Head teacher) has overall strategic responsibility for our children with SEND.

INCo (Inclusion Lead): Mrs Katie Andrews from January 2023

She can be contacted via the office or by e-mail: senco@ashwell.herts.sch.uk

Inclusion Link Governor: Mrs N Button

Contact via the School Office - admin@ashwell.herts.sch.uk

All children can expect a fully inclusive, well differentiated education at our school, some children may need additional support during their time with us and a few children will need more precise individualised support.

1. How does the school know if children need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

According to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015), a child or young person 'has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her... or if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age'. Or 'has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools'.

Each child's current level of attainment is assessed on entry, so that any significant difficulties can be identified early on. Sometimes the school receives information from previous settings such as playgroups or former schools which lets us know that our new pupil has SEN or a disability.

Children are continually assessed in a variety of ways and this information is used at termly **Pupil Progress and Attainment Meetings (P-PADS), SEN Surgeries**, as well as at other times during the school term. At P-PAD meetings the class teacher and Headteacher will discuss the progress of all children in the class and have an opportunity to compare against both age related expectations and also prior attainment. In SEN Surgeries teachers will discuss any pupils with emerging or enduring needs that may be linked to SEND. Both meetings provide an opportunity to chat about the children's general development, including aspects of their social and emotional wellbeing and include any information and concerns from parents.

Based on these meetings, decisions will be made around the current need for additional support for some children and exactly what that will look like for the child.

If a parent or carer thinks their child may have a special educational need, they should make an appointment with the class teacher to discuss concerns. Sometimes it might be necessary for the INCo to be involved.

2. How will school staff support my child and who might work with them?

All staff have a duty to support all children within the school environment and our INCo oversees the additional support that some children need.

The class teacher has overall responsibility for meeting the needs of the children in his or her class and plans day to day activities to meet the needs of your child, which will include high quality teaching for the whole class and specific teaching for small groups or individuals. The class teacher will ensure that your child is carefully assessed so that gaps in knowledge and skills and barriers to learning can be identified and teaching planned to overcome them. Your child will be regularly re-assessed to make sure s/he is making progress and to adapt the interventions planned for him or her.

Teaching assistants work under the direction of a class teacher. Teaching assistants sometimes support children so that they can access the whole class work and sometimes lead interventions or 'catch-up' programmes for small groups or individuals, for example to help them improve their knowledge of phonics, spelling or arithmetic. Sometimes the class teacher works with small groups or individuals for short periods while the teaching assistant supports the rest of the class in their independent work.

A small number of children with SEND have a learning support assistant (LSA) who is specifically employed to work with them for a number of hours a week, following programmes planned by the class teacher, following advice from specialist services.

The school has an Inclusion Co-ordinator (INCo) who is a senior member of staff whose role is to oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's SEND policy and co-ordinate the assessment of and provision for children with SEND. The INCo advises class teachers and teaching assistants on the graduated approach to providing SEND support, liaises with parents/carers and with specialist services and ensures that the school keeps the records of all pupils with SEND up to date.

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the education of all pupils in the school. The Headteacher and INCo are responsible for ensuring the school's SEND policy and procedure are implemented.

There is a school governor with specific responsibility for the provision for children with SEND, and the Curriculum and Pupil Welfare Committee of the Governing Body oversees provision for children with SEND on a general basis (names of pupils are not shared with governors).

3. How will I know how my child is doing and how might I be involved in discussions and planning?

The school has two parent consultation evenings and a detailed written report in the summer term for all children. This means that each term, teachers will give you an idea of your child's progress in relation to age related expectations, allowing you a better understanding where your child fits within the 'national picture'. When reporting progress, we will also talk to you about the child's starting point for that academic year or Key Stage. It is important to recognise that your child can be making 'good progress' in relation to this starting point but still be working below age related expectations.

Some children who have a SEND Support Record will have this reviewed termly and the review and new targets will be shared with parents and children around or at the time of the consultations. Parent consultations are a good opportunity to hear how you feel your child is getting on although the short time slot can mean that a separate appointment at another time might be better. Mrs Andrews, our INCo, is available on these nights or by an appointment at a time to suit you to see you about a concern.

The school accommodates an 'open door policy' which allows for more regular updates and also the opportunity for parents to liaise with other appropriate staff either in person or via email through the office.

For a few children who have an external agency involved or those with an EHCP (Education Health and Care Plan) the parent will be involved in review meetings.

In some instances, a 'home-school book' or similar system may be used where increased, regular communication is thought useful to sustain over a period of time.

4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?

At Ashwell school we use an adaptive teaching approach to ensure that all learners different needs are accommodated to enable all children in a class or group to make progress in their learning. Teachers and support staff put supports and scaffolds in place to assist children in accessing the curriculum. This might be through the provision additional resources such as word banks, physical equipment e.g. manipulatives in maths or sensory resources, or enabling the use of assistive technology.

Some children may require additional support in the form of small group work or individual programmes of support. Where this is in place, the class teacher, support staff and INCo regularly monitor and review progress of such interventions.

Where a child's educational needs are not being met by adaptive teaching, the school will follow the 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' model of intervention and support as laid out in the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

- In identifying a child as needing SEND support the class teacher, working with the INCo, will carry out a clear analysis of the pupil's needs. This involves listening to the views of the parent and pupil.
This assessment is reviewed regularly. This helps to ensure that support and intervention are matched to need, barriers to learning are identified and overcome, and that a clear picture of the interventions put in place and their effect is developed.
- Where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEND support, the parents are formally notified. Support and interventions are decided upon to meet the outcomes identified for the pupil, based on reliable evidence of effectiveness. They may take on the form of specific teaching to fill gaps in learning, such as spelling or reading interventions.
- The class teacher remains responsible for working with the child on a daily basis, and retains responsibility where the interventions involve group or one to one teaching away from the main class. The INCo will support the class teacher in the further assessment of the child's particular strength and weakness.
- The effectiveness of the support and interventions and their impact on the pupil's progress are reviewed regularly, along with the views of the parents and pupil.

Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite evidence based support and interventions that are matched to the pupil's area of need, the school may consider involving outside specialists. These specialist services may also be included at any point to advise them on early identification of SEND and effective support and interventions.

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEND of the child, they have not made expected progress, the school or parents may consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

We are a happy school. Your child's wellbeing is paramount and we pride ourselves on our inclusive environment. Class teachers are regularly reflecting on the wider wellbeing of the individuals in their class.

The school has clear policies and guidelines around such things as medical needs, personal care, equality and behaviour and bullying which you are welcome to read or discuss further as and when the need arises. Many of these policies are on our school website or available from the school office.

Day to day, all children's emotional health is well supported with such things as PSHE sessions and circle time in class. Some children may additionally be offered support such as protective behaviours sessions, social stories or social skills groups. All children are regularly taught mindfulness and are helped to develop strategies to support with developing positive mental health.

Mrs Hayley McBeal is our Lead TA and Mental Health Champion. She has received extensive training in many aspects of mental health, and has allocated time each week to work with individuals and groups in the areas of social, emotional and mental health wellbeing.

The INCo also produces a half-termly Mental Health and Wellbeing Newsletter to develop parent understanding of the strategies we use in school and to signpost to any additional support services that are available.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

The school can also call upon the expertise of professionals such as the school nursing team, Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, the Educational Psychology Service, the Specific learning Difficulties Team, the Communication and Autism team, North Herts Support Services and Family Support Worker. We also regularly liaise with the Child Development Centre and Children's Services. If you wish to discuss exploring support from a specialist service, please talk to Mrs Andrews in the first instance.

7. What training have the staff supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

The INCo has completed the SEND Award, a SEN qualification at Masters Level.

Members of staff have also been trained in Protective Behaviours. Most staff are trained in first aid, with a number in the Early Years having done paediatric first aid.

All staff support children with SEND. We monitor our "inclusive environment" regularly.

All staff benefit from regular CPD both in school and via external providers. This training will vary depending upon the relative experience of the staff and specific needs identified both on an individual and school-wide basis.

Individual staff training takes place as need arises. This may be identified by the teacher at Pupil Progress and Attainment Meetings, SEN Surgeries, or may be directly linked to a new or existing intervention. Where possible the teacher and TA are trained at the same time and training is facilitated in school, so as to include the widest possible audience.

The school is a member of the group **North Herts DSPL** (Developing Special Provision Locally) which supports the school and, therefore, the children with a range of training opportunities and access to experts.

Via the INCo, the school receives ongoing advice from outside specialists, and attends regular SEND briefings and updates.

8. How will you help me to support my child's learning?

We hold regular curriculum information meetings to help you support your child. These tend to be around the areas of Maths, English and e-safety and can cover such things as phonics, spelling, grammar and numeracy skills. Decisions on the content of the meetings are made in response to parent questionnaires and emerging need.

You will receive regular class newsletters and curriculum plans to help you stay in touch with what the class is doing that half term. Our website is another source of useful information and worth checking regularly.

Parent consultations are another opportunity to discuss the support you can give your child at home but teachers are happy to discuss how you can support your child at home on a more personal basis where the need arises.

If your child has an SEND Support Record, you will be involved in regular meetings, at least once each term, to agree the desired outcomes for your child and plan how these can be achieved. As part of this, the role you can play at home will be discussed and agreed.

All classes have an expectation of home learning, which will vary in content and quantity from year group to year group and child to child. This should be made clear to you at the start of the year, but if in doubt please ask.

Please let the school know if your literacy or numeracy is an issue for you at home so that we can support you further.

9. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

Ours is an inclusive school and the needs of all children will be considered in the planning of any trip or event. School trips are planned meticulously using County's Risk Assessment format, which will include individual risk assessments where needed. Staff allocation will be informed by this process. Parents may be involved at all stages of the planning and delivery of any school trip or event to ensure success.

10. How accessible is the school environment?

As the school is built on a slope, there are several flights of steps within the building which create some problems for access for wheelchairs. Most but not all rooms in the school can be reached by wheelchair.

- The foyer, office and dining hall has limited wheelchair access.
- The 1950s classrooms near the dining hall, the Victorian classroom, the 1990s classroom near the hall and the hall can all be accessed via a concrete pathway which runs all the way round the school.
- The Foundation Stage and the Victorian classroom and the children's toilets can all be accessed via side doors onto the Early Years playground.
- The classrooms in the new block can all be accessed via the pathway from the playground or from the meadow, using the lift to move from one level of the block to the next.
- There is a portable ramp available for moving wheelchairs over thresholds.
- There are disabled toilets in both the main block of the school and the new block.

If children have a hearing or visual impairment, equipment such as radio aids or specially adapted computers are provided by specialist services if needed.

11. How will the school prepare and support my child at times of transfer?

Change can be difficult for all children to manage but can be a particular challenge for those with SEND.

When children are about to join our Foundation Stage, parents/carers are invited to tour the school and can raise any concerns with the Foundation Stage staff or the Headteacher. Each child has a keyworker, who will meet the child in their previous setting (playgroup or nursery) if possible and talk to staff at the setting about the children who are joining the school. Any written records are passed on to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Children are invited to visit the Foundation Stage with their parents/carers before they start their regular sessions and spend time with their keyworker.

When children join us from other schools, we encourage parents/carers to visit with their child(ren) before they begin. Information is sent to us by their previous school, including information about any special needs or disabilities. New pupils are given help to settle into their new class, with other children acting as 'buddies' to make sure they have someone to play with at playtime, and adults explaining unfamiliar routines. All parents/carers of new pupils receive an information pack about school procedures and routines.

When children move on to secondary school, teachers from the secondary schools visit them in Ashwell, and the children have the opportunity to spend time at their new school during the school day. Secondary schools also hold information evenings for pupils and parents/carers, and sometimes run special sessions for children who might find transition difficult. The SENCo from the secondary school and another senior member of staff, generally the head of Year 7, visit the school to discuss individual children with their current teachers, including and SEND issues. The DSPL also facilitate a transition event, whereby Primary SENCos can meet with individual Secondary SENCos to discuss pupils. Assessment results are sent on to the new secondary school. If necessary, we can arrange for children transferring to secondary school who might find it difficult to make extra visits to their new school to help them to get to know it.

Transition books are used for a few vulnerable children at transition times and, depending on the child, additional visits, parent meetings, support, mentoring, photographs and information on the new staff or environment may also be part of supporting your child's transition.

If children move to another school during their primary years, assessment results and other information, including about any SEND, is sent on to their new school.

12. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational need?

The School's SEND budget allocation is predominantly used to provide additional staff support that will be used strategically to support as much identified need as possible.

A smaller percentage is used for specific training and to purchase resources and equipment as necessary; all of which is again deployed according to need.

A few children with "High Needs" that require more support than the school budget can sustain, may need the school to apply for additional funding from the DSPL held pot of money known as the **Local High Needs Funding (LHNF)**. An application can be submitted termly to a panel and the needs of the child will then be compared against applications from the rest of the district in order to ensure its' "exceptionality" before agreeing the application. Parents will always be consulted if the school is to try and apply for additional funding for their child.

13. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

Decisions are made by the Headteacher in consultation with staff. Any decision will reflect the needs of the whole school as well as the needs of the individual child.

14. How can I find information about the Local Authority's Local Offer of services and provision for children and young people with SEND?

Go to the website www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer

Any questions?

Please talk to us! We truly believe that an open, honest conversation is the best way to resolve any problem you might have. If you do not feel able to do this, The Parent Partnership Service may be able to answer any questions you have or support you in talking to us.