



A Parent Friendly Guide to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

April 2020

The information and organisation relating to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be confusing for parents and carers.

We hope this guide will contribute, in some small way, towards a clearer understanding of the process.



Some children need more help to learn new things at school. If someone needs additional support, they are said to have Special Educational Needs or SEN for short. Sometimes they have a disability too (SEND).

Children with severe or complex needs might be given an Education, Health and Care Plan or EHC Plan for short. This will help children and young people to get support across all parts of their life, including health needs, up to the age of 25. There are Annual Review meetings to ensure that the plan is still appropriate to the needs of the child and monitor progress.

Children and young people who do not have an EHC Plan, but have additional needs, will still get support from school.

This stage is called SEND Support and the class teacher will talk through what your child is working towards and the progress being made.



Sometimes we might ask for advice from other Professionals such as an Educational Psychologist or Speech and Language Therapist.

Where concerns are raised about a child we may ask you to meet with us to complete an Early Help Record (EHR). This gives a full picture of your child's strengths and difficulties. With your permission it is shared with other professionals. Regular meetings called Team Around the Child (TAC) will take place so that targets to support your child can be set and reviewed.

In Abbey Meads Community Primary School, the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator is Mrs Michaela Cunningham. She is in charge of overseeing the provision within the school The SEND Governor is Mrs Lisa Hume.

We have collated some **Frequently Asked Questions** overleaf, but if there is anything else you would like to know, please feel free to contact Mrs Cunningham.



Frequently Asked Questions

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?

At Abbey Meads, we monitor the children's progress carefully and put in interventions to support any child that concerns us. Progress Meetings are held every term between the Class Teacher and Assistant Heads to monitor groups that may be causing a concern. The class teacher will discuss specific children with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and the decision may then be taken to undertake further assessments to help identify any special educational need the child may have. Parents are kept fully informed about this process and their views are sought.

The school holds Parent, Teacher and Child Consultation Evenings which are an ideal time for Parents or Carers to raise any concerns they may have, but staff are available outside this time to discuss any concerns. If your child has SEND identified from their previous school or setting, please let us know so we can make sure the appropriate provision is in place before they join us.



2. How will the school support my child?

Children, who have been identified as having special educational needs, will receive additional support. The amount, type and frequency will depend on the needs of the individual child. Sometimes this will be done in class, either by the Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant. Sometimes the child might be withdrawn from class to work on a specific programme either 1:1 or in a small group. The SENDCo will oversee the programmes in consultation with the class teacher. There is a named Governor with responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

We also have a Teaching Assistant, Mrs Hobbis, who can support children with emotional and mental health needs.

We also have an Educational Mental Health Practitioner, part of Trailblazer Project, who we can refer children and families to.

3. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

Work within class is differentiated to the needs of each individual. Sometimes this may mean the outcome expected is different; on other occasions the support or resources given may be different; at other times the work itself may be completely different.



4. How will I know how my child is doing and how will you help me to support my child's learning?

There are many different ways of keeping in touch with your child's progress in school. These include:

- Parent Consultation Evenings - there are 2 of these over the year.
- Open Hours- there are 3 of these each year and they are a chance to view your child's work.
- Class Assemblies
- Annual report to Parents
- Year Group Curriculum Briefings held at the start of the school year.
- Family Learning Workshops - there are usually 3 of these over the year.

Don't forget your child's teacher is always happy to make an appointment to discuss your child's progress at any time.



5. What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

We have designated first aiders on site at all times. If a child has more complex medical needs, a Health Plan is drawn up by the School Nurse in consultation with Parents and any necessary training is given to staff. All staff are made aware of the Health Plan, a copy of which is kept in school and it is updated at least annually.

Prescribed medicines are administered by staff if the appropriate form is completed. This can be obtained from the School Office.

Regular attendance is vital at school. It is monitored by the School Office who will text if no reason has been received for an absence. If attendance becomes an issue, the Head Teacher will be informed and Parents will be invited to come to discuss the issue so that a satisfactory solution can be found. This might involve an action plan being drawn up or additional support put in place to help.

As part of the Blue Kite Trust, we can refer families to Lighthouse so they can access support from our team of Parent Support Advisors.



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

The school buys in support from a number of services including the Educational Psychology Service. Access to these is prioritised on a needs basis. Referrals can also be made to other services such as Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) or the School Nurse.

We also refer to the Advisory Teacher Services for Hearing Impaired, Autism and Physical Difficulty as required.

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

All staff receive regular in house training on supporting children with SEND. The SENDCo has a Post Graduate Certificate in Specific Learning Difficulties. Training from other agencies is also attended. Over the past year this has included training and support from the Advisory Teacher for Disabilities and the Autism Advisory Service. Abbey Meads Community Primary School is a Dyslexia Friendly School and all staff have had training in identifying and supporting dyslexic learners.



8. How will my child/young person be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

Abbey Meads is an inclusive school. We try to ensure that all activities, including after-school clubs, can be adapted to the needs of our pupils. When planning trips, including residential trips, we liaise with parents to ensure that the adaptations made are appropriate for the individual.

9. How accessible is the setting school environment?

The downstairs classrooms and mobiles are fully accessible, but there are three classrooms upstairs which are not. Specific needs of pupils and staff are considered before classes are placed upstairs. There is disabled changing and toilet facilities within school and a hearing loop in the school hall. There is disabled parking available and disabled access ramp to the school field. The school is supported by the Advisory Teacher for Physical Disability when any additional equipment is required.

If you would like any information in a different language, we will do our best to accommodate.



10. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

We place great value on finding out about the needs of our children before they join us and have an extensive induction programme in Nursery and Reception, where we work closely with the parents to find out about the needs of the individual. When a child joins us in other year groups, we allocate them a 'buddy' to look after them.

At the end of their time in Abbey Meads, we liaise with the next school so they have a full understanding of the child's needs. If it is appropriate, additional visits to the next school are arranged.

11. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's/young people's special educational needs?

The SENDCo, in consultation with the Head Teacher, allocates the resources according to the needs of the children. Some children will obviously require considerably more support than others. Children with more complex needs or those who have an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) may be in receipt of additional high needs funding allocated to them from the Local Authority.



12. How is the decision made about what type and how much support my child/young person will receive?

We look at providing the best support for each individual. It will vary according to the requirements of each child. We aim to promote independence for our children so it is unusual for them to have a full time Teaching Assistant support.

13. Who can I contact for further information?

The first point of contact is always your child's class teacher. The SENDCo is also available to discuss more specific concerns.

If you have any further concerns, or wish to complain please refer to the Complaints Policy on the school website:

<http://www.abbeymeads.swindon.sch.uk/Documents/ComplaintsIss6May2017.pdf>



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