



# Lower Farm School

## How we identify individual special educational learning needs

- v When pupils have an identified special educational need, or disability, before they join our school, we work very closely with the people who already know them and use the information already available to identify what the possible barriers to learning may be within our school setting and to help us to plan appropriate support strategies and/or access arrangements.
- v The Code of Practice 2014 defines SEN as follows:

“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special education provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

  - a) has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or
  - b) 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 or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- v If you tell us you think your child has a special educational need we will discuss this with you and assess your child accordingly. Often these assessments will be carried out by the school, sometimes school seek advice from more specialised services such as Educational Psychology or Speech Therapy – we always share our findings with you and the next steps we need to take.
- v If teachers feel that your child has a special educational need this may be because they are not making the same progress as other pupils, despite interventions. The earlier we take action and modify our provision, the sooner we can resolve concerns and help children towards success. We will observe your child’s learning characteristics and how they cope within our learning environments, we will assess their understanding of what we are doing in school and where appropriate use tests to pinpoint what is causing difficulty. This will help us to decide what is happening and why. If school become concerned about your child you will be contacted immediately by their class teacher or the school’s Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Mrs Swain.
- v A special educational needs register will be kept, monitored and updated regularly. Any children deemed to have special educational needs will be identified on this register.
- v The stages of SEN identified by Lower Farm:

EARLY RESPONSE – this is where a child is not making adequate progress – either academically or in any other area eg socially/speech. The child will be targeted using the ASSESS-PLAN-DO-REVIEW cycle. Interventions will be put into place and progress monitored. If, despite these interventions, the child does not make adequate progress, advice will be sought from external agencies. In agreement with these agencies, SENCO and parents, the child may be added to the SEN register.

SEN SUPPORT – after, at least 2 cycles of assess-plan-do-review, if a child continues to make inadequate progress, or we deem that the child has more long term needs, advice from additional agencies, such as educational psychologists or speech and language therapists, will be sought to provide additional strategies to support the child’s individual needs. More focused interventions/adjustments will be provided in order to accelerate progress.

EHCP – if, despite the intense focussed intervention, the child does not make progress



and is deemed to have long term difficulties, advice and evidence will be collated to apply for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

An EHC Plan looks at all the needs that a child or young person has within education, health and care. Professionals and the family together consider what outcomes they would like to see for the child or young person. This plan identifies what is needed to achieve those outcomes. The Children and Families Act 2014 made EHC plans statutory from 1 September 2014.

### **How we involve pupils and their parents/carers in identifying special educational needs and planning to meet them**

- v We are child and family centred so you can expect “no decision about me without me”.
- v When we assess special educational needs we will discuss with you if your child’s understanding and behaviour are the same at school and home; we take this into account and work with you so that we are all helping your child in the same way and helping them make progress.
- v We will take on board the child’s views and ensure their programme considers the holistic view of the child.
- v Where appropriate we will write and review targets and pupils profiles/support plans with pupils and parents/carers, a copy will always be available for you.
- v We hold a meeting every term that allows all school staff, other professionals and family or carers involved with a child, to share information, celebrate progress and achievement and plan next steps.
- v Our staff are available to discuss any concerns you may have about your child, or to share information that either party feels would be useful to the other.
- v Each child has a planner. Teachers will write comments for parents to read at home, when necessary, and we encourage parents and carers to add observations of their own.

### **How we use other adults in school to support pupils with special educational needs or disabilities**

- v Our SENCO leads a team of support staff who are all trained to support pupils with a wide range of educational, social and emotional needs.
- v Our staff are able to undertake small group work or one-to-one support as appropriate to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities.
- v We liaise, regularly, with external agencies such as speech and language therapists, the visual impaired team, the hearing impaired team, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and an educational psychologist.
- v Our Care Guidance and Support Manager, and Pastoral Mentor are very supportive members of the team with an excellent knowledge of how to support our children and their families. No problem is too big or too small. She is available full time, and with very little notice.

### **How we use specialist resources to support pupils with special educational needs or disabilities**

- v Our teachers, and teaching assistants, make bespoke individual resources for pupils with special educational needs that support their specific learning targets and needs, and reflects the learning undertaken by their peers.
- v We use several published programmes such as Toe by Toe, Five Minute Box, IDL and Black Sheep Press pack to support the children’s learning.
- v We have a wide range of reading material to appeal to both boys and girls, with



some high interest, lower level reading text. We, also, use Toe by Toe to support children's decoding of words.

- v We have a wide range of ICT equipment available to help motivate pupils and access learning. These include notebooks, I-pads, microphones, desktop computers, programmable toys and talking postcards.
- v We use workstations, picture and symbol timetables and equipment such as countdown timers where necessary.
- v We seek advice and equipment from outside agencies as and when the need arises, such as specialist seating, or handrails and steps in toilets.
- v We use Makaton, where necessary, to support communication.
- v We use resources such as social stories and Zones of Regulation to aid children's social and emotional learning/behaviours.
- v We have resources specifically designed to aid children with dyslexia such as iPad apps, coloured acetate, talking tins, ACE dictionaries and so on.

#### **How we modify teaching approaches for individual pupils**

- v All our staff are trained in a variety of approaches which means that we are able to adapt to a range of SEN: - specific learning difficulties (including dyslexia); Autistic Spectrum Disorder; speech, language and communication needs; and behavioural, social and emotional difficulties.
- v Our staff are all able to use basic Makaton signs, and some are trained to support pupils using British Sign Language.
- v We adapt reading material by enlarging the text, changing the colour of the text, reducing the amount to be read and so on and create personal reading books using individual children as characters, or create books around our own school themes that match personal abilities and needs.
- v We are a dyslexia friendly school.
- v We are a very inclusive school. Wherever possible children are taught alongside their peers in clear differentiated groups. Teachers adapt their teaching constantly in order to cater for their pupils' needs and learning styles, and plan individual timetables where necessary. When appropriate, staff are deployed to give children additional support in small groups outside the classroom, or to provide one-to-one support.
- v All our staff are trained to adapt resources to either offer a greater level of support or to make learning more challenging so that every child is able to achieve their very best.
- v We use additional schemes/materials so that staff can use as a resource to ensure work is always at the right level for pupils with special educational needs, or those who are gifted and talented.
- v We run a number of 'catch-up' groups for children who are in danger of falling behind their peers.
- v Where appropriate, we offer in-house social and communication groups; these usually focus on Attention and Listening, Speech and Language and Social Communication.
- v We use visual timelines to help children understand what activity or part of the day is coming next.

#### **How we assess pupil progress towards the outcomes we have targeted for pupils. How we review this progress so that pupils stay on track to make at least good progress. (including how we involve pupils and their parents/carers)**

- v In the Foundation Stage we track progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage ages and stages of child development.
- v In Key Stage One we use Birmingham SEN ToolKit where appropriate, to assess



- progress that is in smaller steps than the usual national curriculum levels.
- v We gather views of parents and carers at our termly parent consultation meetings and act upon recommendations immediately.
  - v Parents of children with special educational needs are invited to a special review meeting each term where we discuss progress and set individual education plans outlining small step progress targets. These are set in consultation with parents and other professionals involved in the care and education of the child.
  - v Our SENCO analyses the progress of every SEN child each term, and these results are discussed with class teachers. Each teacher plans targeted interventions for all children whose progress is causing concern, and targets based on the Birmingham SEN Toolkit are planned for children whose needs fall outside normal classroom differentiation. We adapt our teaching to suit the needs of individuals wherever possible – *“If children can’t learn the way we teach, perhaps we should teach the way they learn”* (Howard Gardiner).
  - v We regularly use staff meetings to get all teachers to assess anonymous pieces of work to check our judgements are correct (moderating).
  - v We set challenging targets that are based on nationally agreed guidelines on progress.
  - v We check how well a pupil makes progress in each lesson. Targets are given to the children so that they know what is expected of them to achieve the next step.

#### What extra support we bring in to help us meet SEN:- services; expertise.

#### How we work together collaboratively.

- v We access support from specialist teachers and support staff for advice about accessing the curriculum and SEND related needs such as speech, language and communication; hearing impairment; visual impairment; behaviour related needs; severe learning difficulties and autism.
- v We get support from local authority services about training, policy and funding.
- v Our local authority provides educational psychologist support for assessment, advice and training.
- v We work with Blakenall Children’s Centre to provide services to the community, for example, a parent courses.
- v We get support from speech and language therapy (SALT) and regular advice for all children who are under the SALT team. We refer pupils for assessment, with parental consent, if we believe they need a period of therapy. If a parent is unsure of the waiting times for these appointments, etc, the SENCO can follow this up and give advice.
- v We liaise with the School’s Health Advisor and Educational Welfare Officer regularly.
- v We get support from occupational therapy and physiotherapy for pupils who need assessment for issues such as special seating or advice about exercise programmes. They guide school staff in meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities.
- v We receive support from the Visual Impaired team and Hearing Impairment team to ensure all sensory needs are met.
- v Together we review your pupil’s progress and agree what everyone will do to make teaching more effective and learning easier. We include your child in these discussions when appropriate.

#### What other activities are available for pupils with SEN in addition to the curriculum?

- v We have a before and after school club with trained staff capable of supporting pupils with both special educational needs and disabilities.
- v We have a number of extra curricular activities such as dance, homework, football and



- many more. Pupils with SEN are included, and arrangements are made, when necessary, to support these pupils.
- v We have educational visits, and many other visitors to school bring our curriculum to life. Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities are always included in these and we provide staff to support their full involvement if needed. We always choose enhanced school provision to be accessible by all.
  - v We offer social and nurture groups

### How we support pupils in their transition into our school and when they leave us

- v Children who join our school in 2s/Nursery are welcomed into our school community with a personal home visit by their Nursery teacher. They, also, have a pack that provides the relevant information.
- v Transition to Reception, and then into each successive year-group, is supported by meetings, information leaflets and taster sessions in each new class.
- v If a child has special educational needs, the SENCO will attend transition meetings (either from home to nursery, nursery to nursery or school to school) and create an action plan, where necessary. This ensures a smooth and supportive start to life in our school. Extra visits can be arranged, if appropriate.
- vi When a child is ready to leave our school, in Year 6, transition plans can be created, if appropriate. The SENCO will meet with a representative from the secondary school, and parents/carers to ensure all relevant information is passed on. If necessary, we arrange for extra visits to the new school to ensure the child is familiar with their new environment.

### How additional funding works

- v Schools receive funding for all pupils with special educational needs and we are able to provide what pupils need from this (including equipment). The local authority will top-up funding for pupils with a high level of need.
- v If a pupil's education, health and care plan identifies something that is significantly different to what is usually available, there will be additional funding allocated. Parents will have a say in how this is used. You will be told if this means you are eligible for a personal budget. This must be used to fund any agreed plan formulated by professional advisors, parents and school.

### Where pupils can get extra support

- v We listen to what children tell us about how they like to learn. Their views and feelings are important to us and have an impact on our practice.
- v Our children are made aware of the support that surrounds them in school. They know who to talk to if that are worried or have any concerns they want to share. Our open door policy means that they have access to the headteacher at all times.
- v The Circle of Friends programme, or a buddy system, is set up when we feel a child needs support from their peers.
- v We seek support from an Integrated Behaviour Support Service. They are highly trained in social, emotional and behavioural support and can work with individual children on a weekly basis.
- v We have a high level of staffing at unstructured times such as lunchtime, to ensure children are well supervised and well supported. Dedicated staff involve children in play opportunities.
- v The school always welcomes parents into school and encourages them to discuss any issues however small they feel they are.
- v Parents are welcome in school as volunteers in classrooms, providing a vital extra pair of



- hands that enhances our provision and celebrates our partnership working.
- v Our Care, Guidance and Support Manager is available every day.

#### Where parents/carers can get extra support

- v Our inclusive philosophy aims to support parents of children with special educational needs or disabilities so that their child's journey through our school is smooth, successful and anxiety free. Our practice is enhanced by your views, it is important that people listen to them and that you are satisfied with what happens as a result of our collaboration.
- v The Walsall Parent Partnership Service can offer advice and support to parents of pupils with special educational needs or disabilities. Their telephone number is 01922 650330. Email: [parentpartnership@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:parentpartnership@walsall.gov.uk)
- v Our SENCO and our Care, Guidance and Support Manager can put parents in touch with a wide range of support groups as appropriate to the specific needs of your child. Please come into school and discuss your needs.

#### What parents/carers can do if they are not satisfied with a decision or what is happening.

- v Our school operates an open door policy. Your first point of contact is your child's class teacher, who is always available at the end of every school day. In addition, our Care, Guidance and Support Manager or our SENCO are here to listen to your concerns. If you are not satisfied that your concern has been addressed then you may speak to the head teacher at any time. If she cannot solve your issues, then you may speak to any of our school governors.
- v If your concern is with the local authority, follow a similar path. The person who will log and track your complaint is the headteacher.
- v The local authority has a multi-agency panel who consider unresolved issues. You are entitled to appeal against any decision made about your child that you are not in agreement with. They will offer you an independent mediator if you are still not satisfied. The mediator will try to help you to agree a resolution with the local authority that you are happy with. Telephone 01922 686200. Alternatively, the Parent Partnership Service (01922 650330) provide independent information and advice.