

What is a Special Educational Need?

A child has special educational needs if they have greater difficulty in learning than most of the children their age, and they need extra help to meet curriculum targets.

There are different types of special needs. They may be temporary or long term. They include learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia), emotional or behaviour difficulties, hearing, visual or language impairment, physical or medical difficulties.

If you are concerned that your child may have special educational needs, you should first talk to your child's class teacher.

What will we do?

We will do our best at The Blake School, to help your child to enjoy learning and to make progress. We appreciate that this is more difficult for some children than others. Not every child will reach national standards, but we will still value their contribution to school life and celebrate their successes.

We will try to deal with all difficulties sensitively and in a supportive manner. We want your child to feel as happy and confident in school as possible. Staff work in close liaison with a wide range of other professionals, including the educational psychologist and those from health and social services. Our special educational needs coordinator (or SENCo), Mrs Verity Banbury is available to meet with parents or carers who would like advice regarding any aspect of special needs. Please contact the office to make an appointment.

All children will have access to a broad and varied curriculum. We will adapt your child's work, as appropriate.

Sometimes children work in small groups with teaching assistants, under the direction of the class teacher. At times children will be given individual help. Support is given across the whole curriculum as needed, including physiotherapy and speech and language support.

The law states that ALL children, whatever their needs, should have the opportunity to be taught in their local mainstream school, with appropriate resources. The Blake School caters for pupils with a wide range of special needs and we believe this is an important part of the school's philosophy in creating a caring, understanding and tolerant community for all its pupils.

All children's progress is regularly monitored and assessed in school. We hope to identify special needs as early as possible so that we can take immediate remedial or preventative action. Class teachers will share any concerns they have regarding your child's learning with you. We hope that you will do the same.

If parents and the class teacher share any concerns regarding a child's progress, the child's name may be added to the SEN register to ensure close monitoring. The teacher will then set a few relevant targets, which will be shared and agreed with you and your child. The teacher will usually give support as part of the everyday class routine. Parents or carers will be encouraged to give support at home if appropriate.

If a child is not making progress towards their targets, or if their attainment is considerably below expectations, increased support will be put into place. This involves a more detailed assessment of need and the involvement of the SENCO to agree what sort of special help would be most useful. We may consult other professionals. School will always request your consent before contacting any other agencies. *

Normally, teachers provide children with extra support in small groups, at least two or three times a week, often working with a teaching assistant (TA). A special educational needs action record, called a Pupil Profile (PP) will be kept, until extra support is no longer needed. Targets will be written down in this plan, drawn up by staff and shared with you. These targets will be reviewed and updated at three times a year by the class teacher and parents. Some staff will do this at parents' evenings, others may invite you to meet with them at a different time.

If your child is still not making progress, it may be necessary to increase their level of support. This would normally involve some form of extra help on a daily basis, either in small groups or working with an adult individually. Children at this level usually have more complex needs that require regular input from outside agencies, such as the speech and language therapist or the behaviour outreach support teacher. The educational psychologist may also be informed and may become directly involved in assessing your child's needs.

Every effort is made to involve parents fully and as much notice as possible is given regarding the timing of meetings. We appreciate that parents are sometimes quite daunted by such meetings and you are welcome to bring along anyone else for support.

This information is for guidance only. We aim to treat each child as an individual and will meet their needs as appropriate, and as far as is possible within our limited resources.

Parents who are dissatisfied with the support their child receives should speak to the class teacher initially. The Headteacher, SENCo, and SEN designated governor are also available to meet with you should you require any further support or information.

**We are duty bound by certain professional procedures to ensure the safety of every child. In the event of medical emergencies, major incidents, or disclosures of abuse, we would contact the relevant authorities immediately, informing parents as soon as possible.*

