

WESSEX GARDENS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Specials Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report 2019 - 2020

Welcome to our SEN information report which we publish each year as part of our legal duty under the SEN Code of Practice 2014. The purpose of the report is to give families information on how we meet the needs of children with special educational needs, disabilities and complex medical conditions. We have done this through answering a series of commonly asked questions. For more information please refer to our SEN policy or speak to a member of staff.

What is a Special Educational Need (SEN)?

Children can fall behind in school for lots of reasons. They may have been absent from school, they may have attended lots of different schools and not had a consistent opportunity to learn. They may be worried about something that distracts them from their learning or they may be in the early stages of learning English which temporarily affects their attainment. At Wessex Gardens we are committed to ensuring that all children have access to learning opportunities, and for those who are at risk of not learning, we will intervene. This does not mean that all vulnerable learners have SEN. Only those with a learning difficulty or disability that requires special educational provision will be identified as having SEN.

There are four broad areas of special educational need;

Communication and Interaction (CI)

These are difficulties with speech, language and social communication and may include difficulties understanding and using language, understanding and remembering vocabulary and pronouncing speech sounds. Most of our pupils have English as an additional language and will be at various stages of understanding and using English. This is not SEN. If a child has speech and language difficulties they are usually present in both their home language and English. Social communication is the ability to talk and interact appropriately with other people.

Cognition and Learning (CL)

This may be a general learning difficulty which affects most areas of learning. Children may take longer to learn and master skills and to understand new concepts even with appropriate differentiation of the curriculum. A specific learning difficulty (SpLD) affects one or more specific areas of learning and includes conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia.

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

Children may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which may result in them becoming withdrawn and isolated or displaying challenging behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety or conditions such as attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

All children make mistakes and sometimes behave inappropriately. This is a normal part of growing up and is not a special educational need.

Sensory and/or physical needs (SP)

This includes visual and hearing impairments or physical disabilities, which prevent or hinder a child from learning and making use of educational facilities.

If a child is identified as having SEN, we will provide provision that is 'additional to or different from' the normal differentiated curriculum, intended to overcome the barrier to their learning.

What should I do if I think my child has special educational needs?

In the first instance speak to your child's class teacher or teaching assistant. All staff at Wessex Gardens have a good knowledge of a range of special educational needs but it is your class teacher and teaching assistant who will know your child best at school. You can also talk to a member of the Inclusion team. If you are a new parent and your child is about to start at Wessex Gardens please discuss your concerns at the induction interview with a member of the Inclusion team.

How does the school know if children need extra help?

Class teachers monitor your child's progress on a daily basis and will quickly identify if they need extra support. They will adapt their teaching and use classroom resources including additional support from the teaching assistant to provide that support.

Pupil progress meetings are held once a term and are attended by the class teacher, teaching assistant, a member of the Inclusion team and a member of the senior leadership team. At these meetings the progress of each pupil is discussed and a provision map is drawn up that details the type of additional support a child with SEN will receive for the next term.

What types of support may be suitable and available for my child?

The Local Authority publishes its Local Offer which describes the provision usually available in the borough. You can read the Local Offer here <https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/children-young-people-and-families/the-local-offer-and-special-educational-needs.html>

At Wessex Gardens we have a three-tiered approach to supporting children's learning depending on the nature and severity of their needs.

Tier One - Universal

This is the quality first teaching that all children receive with some adaptations made to the curriculum and teaching made to meet individual needs. All class teachers and teaching assistants have knowledge of a range of SEN and will use teaching strategies that are personalised to help your child to learn.

For your child this could mean;

- Working on individual learning targets
- Working on fewer learning targets
- Working at a slower pace to ensure understanding
- Additional repetition to help remember information and master skills
- Use of practical resources to help understanding and recording of learning
- Breaking tasks down into smaller chunks
- Working in a smaller group with additional support from the teacher or teaching assistant

Tier Two – Targeted Support using additional resources

This will usually involve the use of research-based interventions on a group or individual basis and which cover all areas of SEN. These may take place in or out of the classroom and are usually time limited. They are usually run by teaching assistants, class teachers after school, learning mentors or inclusion teachers. These interventions may be used for children with gaps in their learning and are not limited to pupils with SEN. Examples of current school interventions are;

- Better Reading Support Partners
- Colourful Semantics
- Pre-teaching of vocabulary
- First Class @ Number
- Social skills groups
- Language groups
- Talk Boost
- Beanstalk Reading support
- Motor skills groups

In addition class teachers may run additional phonics, maths, reading and writing groups after school to address gaps in learning. Again, children selected for these groups may not necessarily have SEN but may need an extra boost, for example they may have had some attendance issues.

Tier Three – Higher level support

This is usually longer-term intervention on a regular one to one or group basis from a teacher or teaching assistant. One or more of the above interventions may be used as part of an individual work programme, which is overseen by a specialist teacher. Children will usually receive an assessment of their individual learning needs by a

specialist teacher or an outside professional such as a speech and language therapist to help plan a targeted intervention. A small number of children are identified as having complex, lifelong needs and in this case, more support is sought through an application for an Education Care and Health plan (EHC plan). These children will often receive one to one support for part of the day to help them access the curriculum and to provide a daily individual work programme. Examples of current specialist support available are;

- One to one teaching
- Speech and language therapy

What specialist services are available or can be accessed by the school?

The Inclusion Team has a wealth of knowledge and experience. Helen Ruthven is a trained specialist teacher and can carry out a range of assessments. Along with Antonia Alexandrou, she is able to devise and support the inclusion team in delivering a range of research-based interventions. Teaching assistants receive regular training and have a wide knowledge of a range of special educational needs. They are the main providers of learning interventions in the school. Our Learning Mentors, Zanaba Myrie and Gavin Molloy provide support to children with barriers to learning and specialise in behaviour support.

We are also able to access the support from a range of outside professionals. Some of these work within the school. All are accessed through a referral system. Referrals are made by the Inclusion Team in consultation with parents/carers and class teachers.

Our **Educational Psychologist** is Dr Nina Robinson. She specialises in understanding how children learn. She can carry out more specialist assessments of a child's underlying strengths and weaknesses and she provides advice and training for school staff and parents.

Our **Speech and Language Therapist** is in school for 6 days each term and provides individual therapy for children with Statements or Education, Care and Health Plans. She also carries out assessments on children and gives advice to school staff on how to carry out individual or group interventions. We also buy in additional speech and language therapy support from a private organisation called Talk With Us. They provide whole school training and work with individuals and groups of pupils with identified speech and language difficulties but who do not have an education, care and health plan. Our Talk with Us therapist is Gaby Harris and she is in school one afternoon per week during the spring term.

We are also able to refer children to the Child Development Service for assessment and advice from a paediatrician, physiotherapist and occupational therapist.

For children with social, emotional and mental health difficulties we are able to make referrals to Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and CAMHS in Schools. CAMHS in Schools offers short-term intervention in school. For children with more

severe needs CAMHS offers more specialised or longer-term intervention based at either The Royal Free Hospital or Edgware Community Hospital. They are also able to make a diagnosis of ADHD.

The Local Authority has advisory teachers for physical, hearing and visual impairments and autistic spectrum conditions. These teachers offer advice and support to schools and families on how best to meet the child's needs in school.

How is the decision made about the type and how much support my child will receive?

The type and amount of support given is determined by the nature and severity of the need. Understanding and identifying a child's needs involves careful observation and assessment. Most of this is carried out by class teachers and members of the Inclusion Team. In some cases we will ask your permission to involve the expertise of an outside professional such as a speech and language therapist or educational psychologist.

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

Monitoring progress is an integral part of teaching and learning and this includes reviewing the impact of interventions for learners with SEN. Children are involved in this process by contributing to the setting and review of their own learning targets. Parents and carers are also invited to contribute to this process. Together we will agree what we expect from any intervention and the outcomes we hope for in the long-term. This may take place at parent teacher consultation evenings or at additional meetings. For children with SEN we usually arrange for additional meetings throughout the year so we can discuss the child's needs in more detail. Children with statements or EHC plans have a formal review once a year which may be attended by a range of external professionals.

It is important that the school and family work together if intervention is to be as effective as possible. It can be confusing for a child if home and school are using different strategies to support their learning. We offer general advice on how to support your child's learning at home through curriculum events and more specific advice through meetings with the Inclusion team. We may invite parents and carers to observe us working with their child so they can use similar strategies at home. We can also lend resources to help with specific support.

The Inclusion Leader collates the impact data of interventions, to ensure that we are only using interventions that work and this is shared with the Senior Leadership Team. Progress data of all learners is collated by the whole school and monitored

by teachers, senior leaders and governors. Our school data is also monitored by the local authority and Ofsted.

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

All children will be included in out of class activities unless there is a serious health and safety risk. If this is the case we will review if the activity should be changed so that all children can participate. Usually we select activities that we already know are suitable for all our pupils. Class teachers carry out a reconnaissance visit to identify potential barriers to participation and then complete a risk assessment. We will adapt the activity and make suitable travel arrangements to overcome those barriers. In some cases we may ask a family member to attend a trip with their child.

What extra-curricular activities are available for children with special educational needs?

Most of our activities are open to all pupils and include sport, dance, learning and art activities. They are also mainly free of charge. Letters are sent out to parents and carers for you to sign up your child. There are some which are selective. For example, most of the sports teams which represent the school in competitions are decided by trials where the most talented pupils are chosen. All children are welcome to attend trials. In exceptional cases we might ask you to attend with your child in order for them to participate safely.

How does the school support children with medical conditions?

Upon entry to school, parents and carers will be asked to complete admission forms requesting medical information. This information is passed on to the Assistant Head or Welfare Officer who then meet with the parent or carer to determine the severity of the condition and the support required at school. If children develop medical conditions after entry to the school we rely on parents and carers to inform us. If a member of school staff has concerns about a child's health they report this to the Assistant Head or Welfare Officer.

A minority of pupils will have long term serious conditions that require ongoing treatment and medication. Such illnesses include asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, cystic fibrosis and allergies that may lead to anaphylaxis. To ensure the safety and inclusion of these pupils we work with health professionals and the family to plan and deliver an individual health care plan.

The main purpose of the health care plan is to identify the level and type of support that is needed at school for an individual child. These plans are reviewed annually or more frequently if the child's needs change.

For more information please read our Medical Needs Policy.

What training do the staff receive to support children with special educational needs, disabilities or medical conditions?

Training for teaching and learning staff is provided each year by the Inclusion Team and external professionals. This training is usually linked to the school development plan which identifies whole school areas for development. For example if reading is an area for development, SEN training might involve specific training in how to support children with difficulty learning and using letter sounds. The Inclusion Team receive training throughout the year to help them deliver effective classroom support and interventions. This may include reading, writing, spelling, speech and language, maths and motor skills.

All teaching and learning staff receive annual training on asthma, anaphylaxis and epilepsy. They are trained to administer epilepsy medication and epipens in case of anaphylactic shock . For children with complex medical conditions, specialist nurses train individual members of staff and help to draw up individual health plans with parents/carers and school staff. Lunchtime staff also receive training and are informed of individual health needs.

How accessible is the school, both indoors and outdoors?

Wessex Gardens is built on a slope and has several sets of stairs. We have ramps and lifts to make the ground floor accessible for adults and children with physical disabilities or motor difficulties and there are accessible toilets on the site. Upstairs areas are not currently accessible but these are not usually used by children. Wherever possible we make adjustments to the environment to meet the individual needs of pupils with a range of disabilities.

How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school?

Children are admitted to Wessex Gardens through the Barnet admissions system. This means that in most cases we know nothing about your child until we meet you for the first time. We rely on you to share information with us about your child's needs so we can make the right provision for your child from the very start. Sometimes the child's previous school will inform us of your child's needs before we meet you.

If your child is coming to school for the first time we have information sessions for parents before your child starts Nursery or Reception. A member of the Inclusion Team attends these sessions and you can discuss your child's needs with them.

For children transferring from other schools we have an induction process that begins with a visit to the school where a member of the Inclusion Team will help you to complete admission forms and tell you about the school.

How will the school prepare and support my child to transfer to secondary school?

If your child has special educational needs, a disability or specific medical needs it is especially important to choose the secondary school that will best meet their needs. This process begins at the end of Year 5 when we hold an information session for parents about secondary transfer. A member of the Inclusion Team will be able to help you with additional information about schools that cater for particular needs. It is very important that you visit the schools before making your choice. Most schools have open evenings in September where you can talk to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (Senco) about their SEN provision. If you are still unsure about the suitability of a school the Inclusion Leader is able to liaise with the school for more information.

Transition meetings between the schools take place in the summer term. The class teacher and inclusion teacher will discuss the specific needs of your child with the Head of Year or Senco of the new school.

Your child will participate in focused learning in the classroom, to help them understand the changes ahead. In some cases we offer additional one to one or group support to help children adapt to new routines.

All children make a visit to their new school during the summer term. Additional visits can be arranged for your child to become familiar with the SEN department and meet key members of staff who may be supporting them in Year 7. A member of staff from Wessex Gardens will usually attend with your child.

If your child has an Education, Health and Care plan we will invite the Senco of the new school to your child's annual review. A personalised transition plan will be

drawn up to include additional visits and meetings between staff, children and parents/carers if needed.

Who can I contact for further information?

The best people to contact this year are:

- Your child's class teacher
- Helen Ruthven – Inclusion Leader and Assistant Head
- Antonia Alexandrou– Assistant SENCO

If you are unsure, speak to any member of staff and they will find the best person to help you.

Confidential and impartial advice for parents with children who have SEN can be found at

<http://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/children-young-people-and-families/parental-support/barnet-send-information-advice-and-support-service.html>