Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Information Report

Thistle Hill Academy

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Kent SEND Information Report

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Dear Thistle Hill parents and carers,

The aim of this Information Report is to explain how we implement our SEND policy. In other words, we want to show you how SEND support works in our school.

As educational professionals, we are all working towards the ultimate goal of growing independent young people as they prepare for adulthood. All provision and support we provide is working towards achieving the Kent Children and Young People (CYP) Outcomes Framework:



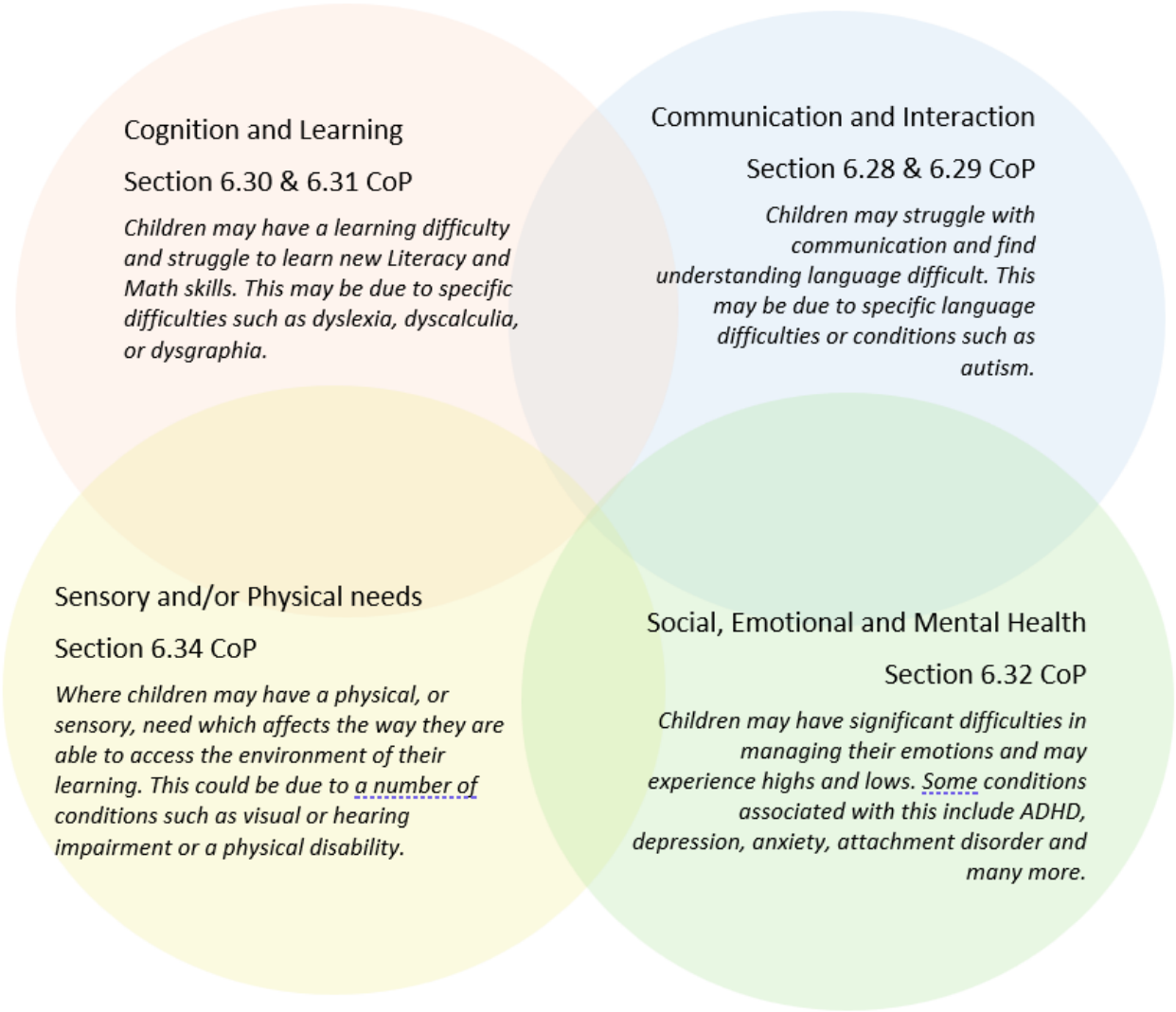
If you want to know more about our arrangements for SEND, read our SEND policy alongside this Information Report.

You can find our SEND policy on our website https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/key-information/#policies

Note: If there are any terms we've used in this information report that you're unsure of, you can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the report.

1. What types of SEND does the school provide for?

Our school provides for pupils with the following needs (as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice 2015):



Often you will find that children's needs overlap and are rarely confined to one area of need, which is why it is important to gain a wholistic overview of your child.

More information about the Areas of Need can be found in the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (link below).

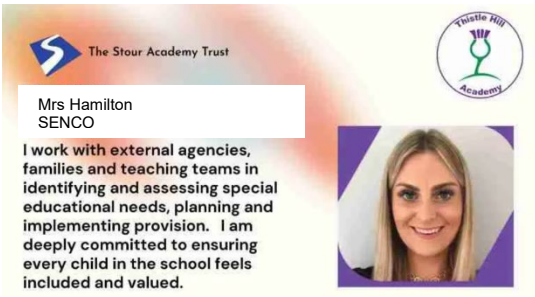
SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf (publishing.service.gov.uk)

2. Which staff will support my child, and what are their key responsibilities?



At Thistle Hill staff are considered responsible for supporting the needs of pupils with SEND. Our staff are committed to regular, high-quality training to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to better meet a wide range of pupil needs.

Below outlines key staff who will be supporting your child in additional to the class team.







Our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, or SENCO

The named SENCO is Mrs Hamilton .

They have over 3 years experience in this role, and they are a qualified teacher. They have worked as Lead KS1 and KS2 Class Teacher.

They achieved the National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination in August 2024.

They have also attended the following training:

- NASENCO
- Understanding Children Solihull Approach
- Autism Education Trust: Making Sense of Autism & Developing Toileting in the Early Years
- ADHD Including Executive Function Skill Package
- Dyslexia Awareness

- Dyscalculia and Math Difficulties
- Stage not Age – Support children with Complex Needs in EYFS/Year 1

Class/subject teachers

All of our teachers receive in-house SEND training and are supported by the SENCO to meet the needs of pupils who have SEND.

They have also attended the following external training:

- Autism Education Trust: Making Sense of Autism & Developing Toileting in the Early Years
- Adapt, Adjust, Enable Training

Teaching assistants (TAs)

We have a team of TAs who are trained to deliver SEND provision.

We have teaching assistants who are trained to deliver interventions such as: -

Beam
Becoming First Class @ Number
Clever Hands and Clever Fingers fine motor skills programmes
Clicker 8
Dough Disco
Drawing & Talking
Dynamo Maths
Emotional Regulation
First Class @ Number
Friendship Skills
Language Link
Language Through Colour
Lego Therapy
Little Wandle
Memory skills programmes
Mental Health First Aid
Precision Teaching
Pre-Teach
Sensory Circuits
Speech & Language
TAMs Journey
Time to Talk programmes
Zones of Regulation
Switch on

In the last academic year, TAs have been trained in the following interventions: -

Beam
Clicker 8
Dynamo Maths
Emotional Regulation
Lego Therapy
Little Wandle
Precision Teaching
Sensory Circuits
Speech & Language
Zones of Regulation

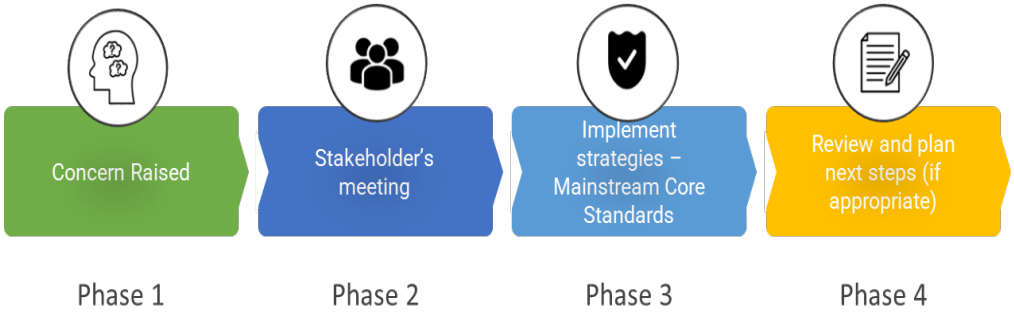
External agencies

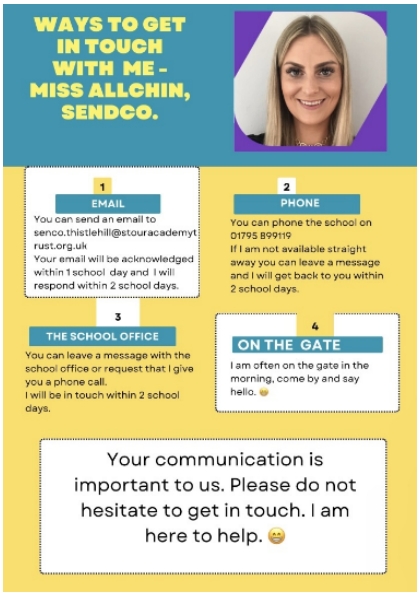
Sometimes we need extra help to offer our pupils the support that they need. Whenever necessary we will work with external support services to meet the needs of our pupils with SEND and to support their families. These may include:

- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- Education welfare officers
- Educational psychologists
- GPs or paediatricians
- NELFT practitioners
- Occupational therapists
- Therapeutic practitioners
- Safeguarding services
- School Liaison Officer
- School nurses
- SEND Inclusion Advisor
- Specialist Teacher Service
- Speech and language therapists
- sector organisation



3. What should I do if I think my child has SEND?

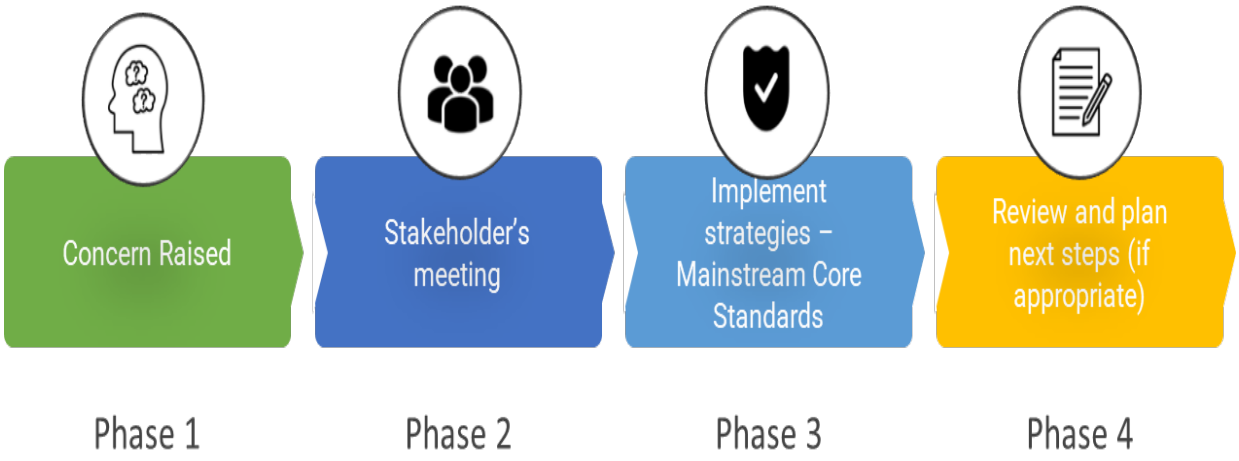


Phase 1	If you think your child might have SEND, raise your concern with the school so that the SENCO is aware. 
Phase 2	We will meet with you to discuss your concerns and try to get a better understanding of what your child's strengths and difficulties are. Together we will decide what outcomes to seek for your child and agree on next steps. We will make a note of what's been discussed and add this to your child's record.
Phase 3	We will implement the agreed strategies and monitor these over an agreed period of time. These are likely to be universal strategies set out in the mainstream core standards. A copy of this can be found here:

	https://www.kelsi.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/117257/Special-educational-needs-mainstream-core-standards-guide-for-parents.pdf . This will initiate the 'Graduated Approach' where support will be continually reviewed. See next page for more details.
Phase 4	If we decide that your child needs SEND support, we will formally notify you and your child will be added to the school's SEND register. They will receive additional support and this will be reviewed using the assess, plan, do, review model.

4. What happens if the school identifies a need?

The same process is followed if a concern is raised by the school.



All our class teachers are responsible for the monitoring of all pupils who have been identified as having SEND. They also review those who are not making the expected level of progress in their schoolwork or socially. This might include undertaking assessments such as Sandwell maths assessment, Little Wandle phonic assessment or a Boxall Profile of social and emotional development.

If the teacher notices that a pupil is having difficulties, they try to find out if the pupil has any gaps in their learning. If they can find a gap, the school will provide appropriate support. Pupils who don't have SEND usually make progress quickly once the gap in their learning has been filled.

If the pupil is still finding it difficult to make the expected progress, the teacher will talk to the SENDco, and will contact you to discuss the possibility that your child has SEND, and the school will follow the graduated approach (see next page).

5. How will the school measure my child's progress?

We will follow the 'graduated approach' to meeting your child's SEND needs.

The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.



Assess	If your child is not making the expected level of progress, we will make an assessment to find out what strengths and difficulties your child has. We will ask for you and your child's input, as well as getting help from external professionals where necessary.
Plan	In discussion with you and your child, we will decide what outcomes we are hoping to achieve. We will make a plan of the support we will offer your child to help them meet those outcomes. We will make a record of this and share it with you and all relevant school staff.
Do	We will put our plan into practice. The class teacher, with the support of the SENCO, will be responsible for working with your child on a daily basis, and making sure the support we put in place is having the impact we intended.
Review	We will assess how well the support we put in place helped the pupil to meet the outcomes we set. We will use our improved understanding of your child's needs to improve the support we offer; this may mean the Plan, Assess, Do, Review cycle continues.

Regular monitoring of provision is conducted to evaluate progress towards outcomes. Formative assessment, which involves ongoing checks of a child's progress during interventions, is carried out using Microsoft Forms, providing a clear overview of day-to-day progress against SEND targets. Summative assessment, which evaluates overall achievement at specific points in time, is compiled through our electronic provision mapping system.

6. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?

We will provide an annual report on your child's academic progress. SEND progress is readily available to our parents and carers through our electronic provision mapping.

A member of staff who knows your child well will meet you at parent consultations to:

- Set clear outcomes for your child's progress
- Review progress towards those outcomes
- Discuss the support we will put in place to help your child make that progress
- Identify what we will do, what we will ask you to do, and what we will ask your child to do

A meeting with the SENDco can also be booked during parent consultations.

We know that you're the expert when it comes to your child's needs and aspirations. So, we want to make sure you have a full understanding of how we're trying to meet your child's needs, so that you can provide insight into what you think would work best for your child.

We also want to hear from you as much as possible so that we can build a better picture of how the SEND support we are providing is impacting your child outside of school.

If your child's needs or aspirations change at any time, please let us know right away so we can keep our provision as relevant as possible.

If you have concerns that arise between these meetings, please contact Mrs Hamilton.

7. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?

The level of involvement will depend on your child's age and individual needs. We recognise that no two pupils are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input.

We may seek your child's views by asking them to:

- Attend meetings to discuss their progress and outcomes
- Prepare a presentation, written statement, video, drawing, etc.
- Discuss their views with a member of staff who can act as a representative during the meeting
- Complete a survey



8. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child?

Your child's teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the pupils in their class.

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs. We will make sure that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum in every year they are at our school.

We will adapt our approaches to how we teach to suit the way the pupil works best. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child and are guided by the Mainstream Core Standards in the first instance.

These adaptations may include:



- Adapting our approaches, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.



- Adapting our resources and staffing



- Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.



- Teaching assistants or support staff will support pupils appropriately depending on their presentation of need



- Scaffolding lesson materials

We may also provide the following interventions:

Attention Autism
Beam
Becoming First Class @ Number
Clever Hands and Clever Fingers fine motor skills programmes
Clever Hands
Clicker 8
Dough Disco
Drawing & Talking
Dynamo Maths
Emotional Regulation
First Class @ Number
Friendship Skills
Fizzy
Language Link

Language Through Colour
Lego Therapy
Little Wandle
Memory skills programmes
Precision Teaching
Pre-Teach
Sensory Circuits
Speech & Language
Time to Talk programmes
Zones of Regulation
Switch on

You can find more information about our interventions on our website

https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/inclusion/

These interventions are part of our contribution to Kent County Council's local offer.

9. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?

We will evaluate the effectiveness of provision for your child by:



- Reviewing their progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions throughout each term
- Using pupil questionnaires
- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding an annual review (if they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan)

10. How will the school ensure my child has appropriate resources?

It may be that your child's needs mean we need to provide additional resources such as:

- Additional resources to support their learning
- Adaptations to in class support

- Further training for our staff
- External specialist expertise

Where appropriate, we will consult with external agencies and/or The Stour Academy Trust Specialist SEND Service to get recommendations on what will best help your child access their learning and use our best endeavours to ensure these are supplied.

11. How will the school make sure my child is included in activities alongside pupils who don't have SEND?



There are no barriers to pupils with SEND enjoying the same activities as other pupils in school. All of our extra-curricular activities and school visits are available to all our pupils, including our before-and after-school clubs and, residential trips. All pupils are encouraged to take part in sports day, school plays and special workshops and no pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability. Admission arrangements for all pupils do not discriminate against, or disadvantage, disabled children or those with special educational needs. We regularly review our practice, facilities and consult with other professionals in order to prevent disabled pupils from being treated less favourably than other pupils. Further information regarding this can be found in our school's accessibility plan. https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/key-information/

The expectation is that all schools providing an inclusive provision for all pupils. It may be necessary for some pupils to receive interventions in addition to a broad and balanced curriculum.

No pupil is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability and we will make whatever reasonable adjustments are needed to make sure that they can be included.

12. How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for pupils with SEN or a disability?



Thistle Hill is aware of its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and complies with non-discrimination provisions and admissions processes.

Arrangement for admissions and accessibility is available on our school website

https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/key-information/

Thistle Hill has a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP). The Local Authority will manage admission to the SRP which is through an agreed consultation process. The SRP is funded by the local authority for up to 15 commissioned places. The SRP is monitored through the SLA/ Contract with the Local Authority carrying out provided for pupils supported by the SRP. The school's SRP provision is monitored as set out in Schedule 8 of the Service Level Agreement/Contract between the KCC SEN Inclusion team, SENDco and SRP Lead teacher

The admission arrangements for a pupil without an EHCP do not discriminate against or disadvantage disabled children or those with special educational needs.

13. How does the school support pupils with disabilities?



You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Thistle Hill's Accessibility Policy and Plan can be found on the school website

https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/key-information/

14. How will the school support my child's mental health and emotional and social development?

We provide support for pupils to progress in their emotional and social development in the following ways:

- Pupils with SEND are encouraged to be part of the school council
- Pupils with SEND are also encouraged to be part of clubs to promote teamwork and building friendships
- We run a nurture club for pupils who need extra support with social or emotional development
- We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying.

Water Meadows Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy can be found on the school website

https://www.thistlehill.kent.sch.uk/key-information/

15. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after children with SEND?



The Designated Teacher for looked-after children and previously looked-after children is Mrs Hamilton, SENDco. Her role is to make sure that all teachers understand how a looked-after or previously looked-after pupil's circumstances and their SEND might interact, and what the implications are for teaching and learning.

Pupils who are looked-after or previously looked-after will be supported much in the same way as any other child who has SEND. However, looked-after pupils will also have a personal education plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEND support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

16. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings or in preparing for adulthood?

To help pupils with SEND be prepared for a new school year we:

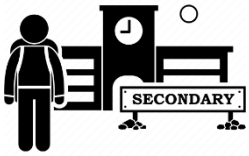
- Ask both the current teacher and the next year's teacher to attend final meeting of the year when the pupil's SEND is discussed
- Schedule lessons with the incoming teacher towards the end of the summer term

Nursery to Foundation Stage Our SENDCO and Foundation Stage teachers will visit nursery settings to gather relevant information. The pupils themselves are able to make several enjoyable visits to school as part of our Rising 4's project. Parents attend Rising 4's with their children and engage in activities that help to prepare children for school. In term 6 there is a new entrants meeting which we encourage all parents and carers to attend and, later in that term, parents meet 1:1 with their child's class teacher to be. The SENDCO will also meet with specialist agencies that are involved with supporting the child so that essential information is shared.

Foundation Stage to year one Children make visits to their new classroom in term 6 of the FS year. They also have the opportunity to meet their next teacher for a specially planned activity. The Foundation Stage curriculum is mirrored for the first term of year one to help children transition to the national curriculum.

Transitions to new classes Some children with special needs find the transition to a new class and teacher more challenging than others. These children are provided with an individual transition plan to help reduce anxiety.

Transition to secondary school We arrange visits to the new placement for year 6 pupils.



Occasionally, when needs are very high, we will arrange for a member of staff to accompany a pupil 1:1 to a secondary placement. We also offer a weekly support intervention in term 6 with a focus on various aspects of life in secondary school. We also offer workshops by NELFT specially to support anxieties around transition.

17. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about SEND, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at Kent's local offer.

The Local Authority's local offer

https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs

Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (CATIE)

A Countywide Approach to Inclusive Education (kelsi.org.uk)

Our local special educational needs and disabilities information advice and support services (SENDIASS) organisations are:

Learning disability, autism and ADHD: Kent & Medway ICS

Home | IASK

https://www.porchlight.org.uk/

http://www.takeoffworks.org/

https://speechandlanguage.info/parents

Home | NELFT NHS Foundation Trust

Support for school age children with SEND (5 to 16) - Kent County Council

Kent Parents and Carers Together (PACT) - Kent County Council

Children's Therapies - The Pod | Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) - Kent County Council

Local charities that offer information and support to families of pupils with SEND are:

ADHD Sheppey

Autism Apprentice

Sheppey Matters

National charities that offer information and support to families of pupils with SEND are:

- IPSEA
- SEND family support
- NSPCC
- Family Action
- Special Needs Jungle
- Maya's Community Support Center – Always putting people first
- A charity run by parents & carers of disabled children & young people

18. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEND support?

Complaints about SEND provision at Water Meadows should be made to Mrs Hamilton , SENDco in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

All complaints relating to a named member of staff must be sent to the Headteacher.

If a complaint is not resolved after it has been considered by the governing body and you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the pupil themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the SEND Code of Practice.

If you feel that our school discriminated against your child because of their SEND, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first-tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disability-discrimination

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- Admission
- Exclusion
- Provision of education and associated services
- Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal. You can find full details here https://www.globalmediation.co.uk/service/special-educational-needs-disability/

19. Supporting documents

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- Equality Opportunities Policy and Statement
- Child protection Policy
- Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy
- Accessibility Policy and Plan
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy
- SRP Policy



- SEN & Disabilities Code Of Practice 2015
- Mainstream Core Standards

20. Glossary

Access arrangements – special arrangements to allow pupils with SEND to access assessments or exams
AD – Attention Deficit
ADH – Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity
Annual review – an annual meeting to review the provision in a pupil's EHC plan
Area of need – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a pupil with SEND: communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs
AS – Autistic Spectrum
CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CI – Communication & Interaction
CL – Cognition & Learning
DDA – Disability Discrimination Act
DfE – Department for Education
Differentiation – when teachers adapt how they teach in response to a pupil's needs
EAL – English as an Additional Language
EHC needs assessment – the assessment carried out by the local authority to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan
EHC plan – an Education, Health and Care Plan; a legally-binding document outlining a child's needs and provision
EP – Educational Psychologist
First-tier tribunal/SEND tribunal – a court where appeals can be made regarding EHC needs assessments, plans, or SEND discrimination
Graduated approach – an approach involving successive cycles of assessing, planning, implementing, and reviewing SEND support
HI – Hearing Impairment
HNF – High Needs Funding
Intervention – a short-term, targeted teaching approach with a specific outcome in mind
LIFT – Local Inclusion Forum Team
Local offer – information from the local authority about available SEND services and support
MLD – Moderate Learning Difficulty
OD – Oppositional Defiance
Outcome – targets for improvement for pupils with SEND (not necessarily academic)
OT – Occupational Therapist
PD – Physical Disability
PDA – Pathological Demand Avoidance
Reasonable adjustments – changes a school must make to remove/reduce disadvantages caused by a child's disability
SALT – Speech & Language Therapy
SEN – Special Educational Needs
SENDco – Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SEND Code of Practice – statutory guidance schools must follow to support pupils with SEND

SEND information report – a report schools must publish about how they support pupils with SEND
SEND support – special educational provision that meets the needs of pupils with SEND
SEMH – Social, Emotional & Mental Health
SLD – Severe Learning Difficulty
SPLD – Specific Learning Difficulty
Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) – specialist teaching bases within mainstream schools
STLS – Specialist Teaching & Learning Support
Transition – when a pupil moves between years, phases, schools, or life stages