

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities at Whitkirk Primary

School Local Offer

Introduction

This document has been put together to help answer some frequently asked questions about special educational needs. Hopefully your questions will be answered but if you feel that you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact the school on 0113 2606203. This is what is called the Leeds Local Offer.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I do if I think my child may have Special Educational Needs?

If at any point in your child's school year you have a concern about their learning then it is advised that speaking to the class teacher may be a good starting point. The class teacher will know your child best and be able to discuss any concerns with you.

If after this discussion it is felt that there are additional needs that need to be addressed then the class teacher will complete an Internal Referral Form and meet with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), Afua Downes. Following this a meeting will be arranged to talk through a plan.

Where possible we will hold as few meetings as possible but with all the relevant information gathered so that concerns do not have to be continually repeated. The SENCO will coordinate these meetings and inform both parents and class teachers of any changes to provision or further referral.

If the concerns are sufficient that the class teacher and SENCO feel that additional advice and support is needed school may require permission to request support from the special needs team within Leeds or the extended services team in the TNCP Cluster. It may be necessary to speak to your GP about a referral to specialist teams.

How will school support my child?

More often than not children need additional support during their time in school. If your child has an additional need that is being addressed in school then you will be informed.

Children may work in groups and at times 1:1 with adults in school. They will have an individualised provision map (IPM) which may contain specific targets. A child with an IPM may have support from outside school, for example, the special educational needs inclusion team (SENIT) or specialist teacher.

Where possible school will ask that follow up work is done at home to help support the learning for your child. As with any homework the support that you can give from home is very much appreciated.

If your child has taken part in an intervention or had additional 1:1 support their progress will be very closely monitored and reported back to you. If concerns about your child's learning still remain then a further meeting will be held to help to discuss next steps. Likewise, if they have made good progress a closing meeting will be held.

It may be possible to request additional resources in school to support your child. If this is the case, you will be informed.

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

As with all planning and provision in school we aim to make learning relevant, challenging and fun. Challenge is essential for good progress but is done with varying degrees of support to allow your child to explore their ideas in an independent way. The children are taught how to find the appropriate resources and support for the learning that they are undertaking.

Where necessary children with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND) may work closely with adult support or be given developmental tasks appropriate to their targets.

At all points in the planning process your child's individual strengths are considered as well as taking note of how they like to learn. Where there is a choice about learning style this will be incorporated into the lesson so that all children are included and can enjoy the learning.

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

The school has a range of systems in place to report children's progress. There are three individual provision map review meetings per year that will discuss your child's strengths and areas for development. In addition to this, there are two parents evenings which we advise you to attend allowing you to meet the class teacher and discuss your child's successes and next steps.

All staff are present in their classrooms before and after school and we welcome informal discussion about your child. Where this may take more time or there is a specific concern please be aware that a meeting time will be arranged to discuss this in more depth. You can also access advice and support from the leadership team (including the SENCO) on the playground before and after school each day.

If your child has a SEND there may be further meetings to attend to discuss progress, coordinate meetings with other professionals or to discuss next steps. Where there are formal meetings with outside agencies you will be informed of these in good time and there will be opportunity to discuss the content before and after the meeting.

If at any point in the process you feel you need to ask questions or need additional support, then our Learning Mentors are available to discuss this. The Learning Mentors in school are Sarah Hart (DSL) and Liz Audsley. All can be contacted through the main office phone number.

SENDIASS (Leeds SEND Information Advice Support Service) service is also available to support you and is independent of the school. Schools have information leaflets that can be requested if needed. Their contact information is 0113 3951200 sendiass@leeds.gov.uk

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

Well-being of all children is taken very seriously at Whitkirk. All the children are encouraged to regularly discuss how they feel and they are made aware of what to do if they are finding learning, emotions and behaviour a challenge.

If your child needs to spend time discussing concerns or feelings then they can talk to our Learning Mentors in The Haven. Your child can access support and speak to an adult away from the immediate learning environment. If these concerns continue then they may be given support for this 1:1 or in a small group.

For children who are finding it particularly difficult to learn due to an emotional or behavioural concern then school may look to the expertise of the members of the TNCP Cluster extended services team. The TNCP Cluster is a group of local schools that help support each other and have access to Behaviour Support Workers, Emotional Wellbeing Workers and Mental Health Specialists.

If it is felt that your child would benefit this additional support you will be informed and have an opportunity to discuss this with the Learning Mentor or SENCO.

What specialist services and expertise are available or accessed by school?

Working, living and growing up in Leeds allows for a wide range of services to be accessed by schools and youth schemes.

Service in school include emotional well-being support, MindMate and a range of play, lunchtime and after school clubs.

Generally, if a child is experiencing difficulties with their learning then the Special Educational Needs Inclusion Team (SENIT) will be contacted for advice. Following a referral to this team a visit may be arranged where they would meet your child and complete a range of educational based assessments. Once these assessments have taken place a report is given to school with advice about how to develop your child's learning and next steps.

For children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties the Extended Services team will be contacted and your child's case may be taken on with a key worker identified to help support your child. They may make a referral to CAMHS to seek additional support both in and out of school.

As a school we are very fortunate to have an on-site Speech and Language Specialist who we have access to. Inspirations is a specialist external company of speech therapists who work alongside teachers and support staff to identify needs, create targets and complete 1:1 and group work to help support language and communication difficulties. One member of staff is also an Autism specialist.

What training do staff supporting children with Special Educational Needs or a Disability have?

Our Assistant Headteacher & SENCO, Afua Downes currently holds the SENCo Award Qualification and has a master's degree in child development.

All class teachers have up-to-date SEND training and continue their professional development through courses and in-house training with the SENCO.

If your child has 1:1 support the member of staff working with them will be given all the relevant information to ensure that they complete their role to the very best of their ability. RKLТ and the local authority offer a range of courses specifically for Special Needs Assistants (SNA) to ensure that they are fully trained and supported in their role.

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

At Whitkirk children are encouraged to take part in a range of activities and after school clubs. If your child has an interest in an afterschool activity then they will be able to access these clubs along with their peers. If extra support is needed while they attend the club this can be arranged by school.

How accessible is the school?

There are two external entrance gates for pedestrians, one of which runs alongside the one vehicle access road (Templegate Walk). Disabled parking is available. Paths around the site have a combination of slopes and ramps making most areas accessible for wheelchair users. The school also has a disabled toilet and hygiene suite to cater for the needs of wheelchair users. The hygiene suite also has a special bed which can be raised and lowered as needed to support children who need help with self-care.

How will the school help my child on transfer to the next phase of their education?

During your child's time at school there are key transitions that will be managed sensitively. Moving year groups and school can be a time of uncertainty but with carefully planning and meetings we aim to help support this process. All information that is relevant will be passed to the new class teacher and there will be opportunities for meetings at parents evening and within school for you to discuss any concerns.

On transition to high school there will be the opportunity to visit the school and meet the relevant people. If your child has a special educational need then meetings between our school and the receiving high school will be help and further parents meetings arranged. Some children may have a specific transition plan or book to make this easier and reduce anxiety around this time of change.

If your child has been working in a small group and they are due to return to whole class teaching then you will be informed of this change and have the opportunity to discuss this with the class teacher and SENCo.

How are the school's resources/funding allocated and matched to the children's needs?

Leeds City Council are currently undergoing the SEND and Inclusion transformation programme whereby the previous Funding For Inclusion (FFI) model is no longer applicable. Only children who have significant need and hold an Education, Health and Care Plan will be eligible for additional funding. This allows the child to have personalised support as well as whole class teaching.

How are the parents involved in the school and how can I be involved?

We are a very busy school and have a large number of opportunities for parents. As well as the main parents' evenings, we have adult learning workshops both in school, (provided by MindMate) and also online (provided through the TNCP Cluster). These are run in school time and can also include learning with your child.

Every week we hold celebration assemblies and each class will hold a class assembly where you can share in the successes of your child and their peers.

If you would like to share ideas for the school as a whole and join in fundraising you can join the Whitkirk PTA. From time to time we will advertise for Parent Governors who help to develop the school as a whole and support the Head teacher to ensure that our school is meeting the needs of all the children and staff. If you would rather share your views in an anonymous way then yearly questionnaires give the opportunity for comments and ideas to be shared. We also have a Facebook Page, Twitter and Class Dojo to support simple communication and also the school Website.

Who can I contact for further information?

If you would like any other information, please do not hesitate to contact Afua Downes (Assistant Headteacher-SENCO) or Sarah Hart (Learning Mentor & DSL) or the school office on 0113 3230010 to arrange an appointment.