

## **When your child is added to the SEND register.**

Sometimes, pupils at Southborough require a provision that is additional to, or different from the majority of their peers, in order to make progress. When that is the case, we may add them to the SEND register. Here are the answers to a few commonly asked questions.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Q. Why is my child being added to the SEND register?**

A. A child is added when, despite good quality teaching and usual interventions, further additional support has been put in place because of concerns over progress.

This can be progress which:

- is significantly slower than that of their peers
- does not match the child's previous rate of progress
- does not close the attainment gap between the child and their peers
- widens the attainment gap.

This may lead to assessment of and identification of a Special Educational Need, which can be under the category of: Cognition and Learning, Communication and Interaction, Social Emotional and Mental Health, and Sensory and/or Physical needs.

#### **Q. What do the categories mean?**

A. *Cognition* refers to a pupil's underlying ability to learn. Special needs in this area may include specific difficulties such as Dyslexia, or generalised difficulties such as Moderate or Severe Learning Difficulties. This will usually have been diagnosed by an Educational Psychologist or specialist assessor. Merely working a bit below their peers does not mean they have special needs in this area.

*Communication and Interaction* can include significant Speech and Language difficulties such as a language disorder, social communication difficulties or Autistic Spectrum conditions. This may have been diagnosed by a Speech and Language Therapist or a Pediatrician. They may receive Speech and Language input or support for social interaction/social skills.

*SEMH* means Social, emotional and mental health. This can include long term difficulties such as ADHD, ODD or OCD or severe Anxiety. This may have been diagnosed by a GP, a pediatrician or a psychologist. Your Child may have been referred to Wellbeing, for example, receive counselling, or need a pass to access a quiet space. These are all examples of SEMH need. SEMH can also be used to describe challenging behaviours: At Southborough we believe that all Behaviour is Communication and a child who is anxious or heightened cannot learn until these needs are addressed. If the causes of the anxiety are addressed and the behaviour settles, your child may then come off the register. We are currently seeing a sharp increase in anxiety due to the pandemic. Not all will need to go on the register as some pupils can be supported by talking to a key adult, and learning strategies to manage their own feelings, but some pupils need more and are in need of professional support from outside school.

*Sensory or Physical needs* include hearing or visual impairment, physical disability and sensory processing needs. At Southborough we have pupils with a range of sensory and physical needs, which are met through adjustment and assistive technologies, when appropriate. Our aim is to remove barriers to learning and offer Equal Opportunity.

**A child or young person may have needs under one or multiple categories.**

**Q. Will they always be on the register?**

A. Not necessarily. Staff undertake a cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review. Your child's progress is carefully monitored against expected outcomes and interventions are planned and adjusted accordingly. If they make good progress and with appropriate interventions manage to close the gap or show that the additional support is no longer needed, they can be taken off the register. You would be notified if this is the case.

**Q. What help will they get?**

A. This varies from child to child, according to need, but usually entails access to some support in class. All teachers are teachers of SEND and staff will make adjustments for your child. There may also be small group interventions via our LSAs, or Mentor team. They may be timetabled for extra literacy, or have a modified timetable in some other way. The SENCO or the SEN team will be able to tell you what your child is accessing and what their targets are.

**Q. Does being on the SEND register mean that they should have an EHCP?**

A. No. For many pupils, being on the register, having Good Quality Teaching, plus additional adjustment or intervention is sufficient to ensure their progress. For a small number of pupils who require a lot of intervention and high levels of support, the SENCO may decide it is necessary to apply for an EHCP to secure more funding from the local authority and/or offer more specialist input. If this is the case, you will be informed.

**Q. Does having an EHCP mean my child gets a 1-to1- support?**

A. No. Research suggests that having one person supporting a pupil all the time is not the best way to develop their independence. We will provide support in class when needed but this is via a team of support assistants across subjects and they will not be glued to your child. The EHCP outlines outcomes and school must work towards those outcomes but this may be in different ways and not via a 1 to 1.

**Q. My child has an EHCP. Will they be taught separately?**

A. No. Your child may come out for small group interventions or for particular areas of the curriculum but we aim to have them in their mainstream lessons as much as possible .

**Q. My child has trouble spelling. Are they dyslexic? Should they be on the SEND register?**

A. Dyslexia is more than poor spelling, although that may be one trait. Some pupils with dyslexia are good spellers. Dyslexia is an umbrella term used to describe a collection of difficulties which include difficulties with auditory memory, working memory, executive function and organisation, reading speed, reading comprehension, and a “spikey” profile which shows their verbal ability to not be matched in their written work. Only a specialist can diagnose Dyslexia, although in school we can use screeners which may indicate the likelihood of the condition. However, if school assesses that your child needs differentiated tasks because of difficulties, and there is evidence of need, this will be put in place with or without a formal diagnosis.

We aim for our dyslexic pupils to understand how their condition affects them and to learn strategies to overcome those difficulties, such as recognising when they need to ask for clarification and how to use technology to assist with accuracy. We also aim to embed relevant study skills, such as how to learn new information, how to plan a piece of writing, how to identify key ideas in a text, skim and scan. With the right tools, our dyslexic pupils can be successful learners.

**Q. I think my child may be Autistic. What do I do?**

A. Autism can only be diagnosed by a multi- professional team including the pediatrician and a psychologist, a specialist SaLT and sometimes an OT. Your school or your GP can refer to this specialist team but there is a long waiting list. If the SENCO makes a referral to an NHS social communication clinic, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire which invites you to tick all the traits you see. Your child’s teacher will do the same. Children are often different in different settings so the pediatrician will look at both questionnaires. You will be invited to an initial appointment at the clinic, to discuss concerns. If the pediatrician thinks there is enough evidence for further exploration, you will be offered a follow-up appointment for a formal assessment. Autism spectrum conditions are characterised by a range of difficulties which include Social interaction, Social communication, rigidity of thought and sensory needs. Sometimes there is evidence of social communication difficulties but not enough for a formal diagnosis. The findings will be written in a report. The information will be shared with your child’s teachers and your child will be added to the register but they do not automatically need an EHCP. Many of our pupils with Social Communication needs or ASD are very successful in school, provided they are supported with social skills and social understanding. A few pupils have more severe difficulties which may require an EHCP. The school will liaise with you if this is the case and monitor support and progress before a decision is taken. At Southborough, we do not see Neurological differences as a negative thing. Our pupils with ASD have many strengths and are a very valuable part of our community. We aim to support them with their diagnosis and learn to be confident in asking for clarification/explanation, recognising that pupils with ASD will need to develop understanding of their own condition.

**Q. My child has been put forward for an ADHD diagnosis. Will they have to take medicine?**

A. ADHD is a neurological condition whereby the brain is not producing the optimum balance of chemicals: This can make a person impulsive, hyperactive, or give them difficulties with attention, concentration, focus and task completion. One treatment is to offer medication which redresses the balance of chemicals and this is often very beneficial. If your child is diagnosed, you will be offered medication. You do not have to give it. This is a parental decision, but if you do not wish to accept the treatment, you may be discharged from clinic. The diagnosis remains, but there would be no need for further review by the pediatrician. In school we offer adjustments such as movement breaks and timed tasks, to support a learner with ADHD. We aim to make them able to independently monitor their own attention and focus and learn strategies to re-focus. For all pupils the goal is independent learning.

**Q. How often can I expect updates on my child's progress?**

A. Pupils on the SEND register will have the same reports and parents' evenings as their peers, although pupils with an EHCP also have a formal annual review, which is documented and shared with the local authority. If you have a concern that you feel needs to be addressed sooner, you can contact the SEND office and speak with one of the team.

**Q. I'm struggling with my child at home. What can I do?**

A. In Bromley, we are lucky to have the Bromley Children's Project (BCP) which offers a range of courses to help parents feel confident in their strategies and offers support for managing behaviour. We can refer you, or you can self-refer. Speak to our Family Support Worker if interested in knowing more.

We hope these FAQ have been useful, if you have any further questions, please speak to your child's class Teacher or the SENDCO.