

Weare Academy First School

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS INFORMATION REPORT

2023-24



HOW WE SUPPORT CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES

Introduction

Our school is a mainstream Academy School for children from 4-9 years of age. We have a Pre-School for younger children aged from 2-4 years old. We are a member of the Wessex Learning Trust (WLT). We welcome everybody into our community. The staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers work together to make our school an inclusive, welcoming and happy place where children can achieve their full potential and develop as confident individuals.

Our SEND provision aims to fulfil the expectations of the Department for Education's (DfE) SEN Code of Practice 2015 published expectations for all settings regarding the provision for SEND.



We aim to ensure that:

- 😊 Children with SEN are able to access their entitlement to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum as part of the whole school community. The school promotes a creative curriculum that encompasses core subjects such as English and Science into the wider curriculum.
- 😊 Children with SEN are educated, wherever possible, in an inclusive environment alongside their peers to enable each student to reach his or her full potential.
- 😊 We match levels of additional support for learning to the wide variety of individual learning difficulties, while enhancing self-esteem.
- 😊 We identify and assess children with SEN as early and thoroughly as possible using the Code of Practice (2015) graduated response approach.
- 😊 Parents/carers and children are fully involved in the identification and assessment of SEN, and we strive for close co-operation between all agencies concerned.
- 😊 We meet the needs of all children with SEN by offering appropriate and flexible forms of educational provision and by the most efficient use of all available resources. The school takes all reasonable steps to modify/adapt the learning environment to meet the individual needs of the pupils.
- 😊 We maintain up to date knowledge of current SEN good practice and methodology in order to offer support and training in these areas to all staff in the school.



There are four main types of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), decided by the DfE:

1. Communication and interaction
2. Cognition and learning
3. Social, mental and emotional health
4. Sensory or physical

If your child has SEN, then their needs will fit into one or more of these areas. A school's provision for SEN is defined as support which is additional to or different from that which is available to all children.

Children with SEN need support for different reasons. These include:

- A Specific Learning Difficulty e.g. Dyslexia (difficulty in reading and writing) or Dyscalculia (difficulty in maths);
- An emotional or mental health difficulty that stops them from making progress;
- A difficulty in communication and interaction e.g. Autism, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD);
- Speech and language delay that needs speech therapy;
- A disability that also means that they need support to learn eg hearing impairment, cerebral palsy or vision impairment;
- An illness that impacts on their learning.

What should I do if I think my child has SEN?

Please tell us if your child is starting school with us and has one of the following:

- An Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP);
- A physical disability;
- A specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia or Dyspraxia;
- A School Entry Plan (SEP);
- Has been diagnosed with, or may have a social communication difficulty such as Autism;
- Has a care plan from a health professional e.g. Speech and Language Therapist or Occupational Therapist;
- A mental health diagnosis or is having support from CAMHS or a counsellor;
- An Early Help Assessment (EHA) that has been started by another school, healthcare professional or Social Services.

This will help us to work with you and begin to plan to meet the needs of your child.

If your child is already at our school, and you think that they have SEN, you can:

- Talk to your child's teacher straight away;
- Then, make an appointment to speak to our SENCO.

How will the school know if my child needs extra help?

We recognise that children make progress at different rates and not always in a steady linear pattern. From time to time, children need extra help to make progress because they have a 'barrier' (difficulty) that stops them from learning at the same rate as other children. When this happens, we have different ways to help them keep up through our 'graduated response' which is integral to our whole school approach for supporting children with SEN.

Somerset Graduated Response Tool

Quality First Teaching underpins all educational provision. Through this, children's needs are met in the classroom through highly focussed well planned personalised teaching with high expectations for all learners. Somerset's Graduated Response Tool, launched in 2022 (replacing the previous Core Standards) describes the entitlement of children and young people with Special educational Needs and Disabilities in early years settings, schools and further education in Somerset. We are using this to aid our graduated response in school.

You can learn more about Somerset's Graduated Response at:

[What to expect from education \(somerset.gov.uk\)](http://somerset.gov.uk)

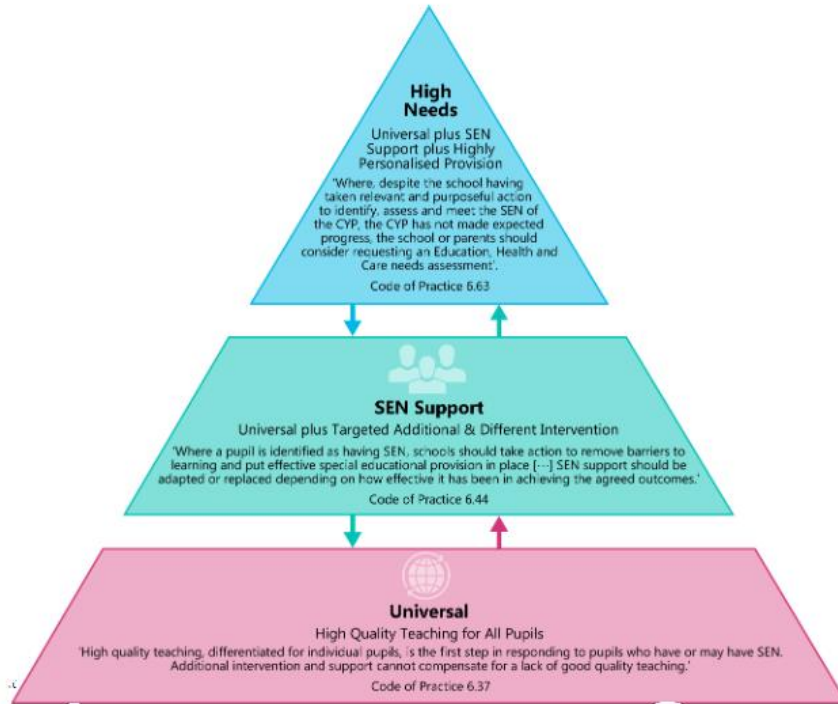


What will the school do if they think my child has SEN?

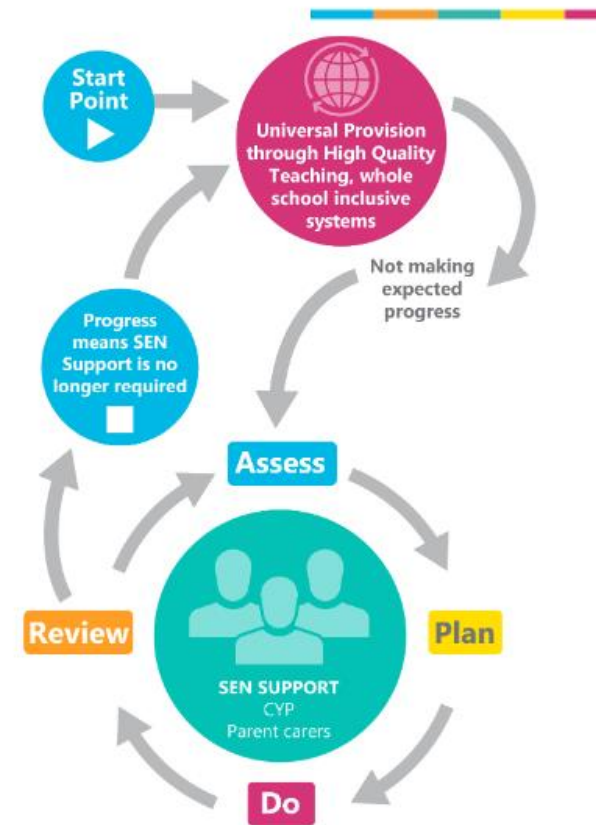
If you inform us that you think your child has SEN, we will discuss this with you and investigate by:

- We will talk with your child to find out what they feel they are good at and what they think they need more help with. We will talk to them about what they want to do when they grow up and help them to find ways to work towards their goal. This is called 'Pupil Voice'. It is one of the ways that we make sure we are an inclusive school
- We will talk to you and listen to your views and hopes that you have for your child. This is called 'Parent Voice'. It is another way that we are an inclusive school;
- Together we will plan support for your child. If there are concerns that they have emerging SEN, in the first instance they may be added to a highlighted needs list. This will mean that extra support is put in place and its impact closely monitored. If, after this support, your child is identified as having SEN, their name will be added to the SEN register and an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) or alternative support may be put into place;
- All children with SEN have their ILP targets reviewed at least termly to see if they are working. We do this by looking at your child's work, using assessments to see if they are making progress and by keeping notes about work that your child does. This is shared with you. We talk to your child to get their views on how they think they are doing and what they think they need help with. Together, we decide what the 'next steps' in your child's learning journey should be and identify new targets;
- Your child's needs may change over time and provision will reflect this. This means that if appropriate, your child may be removed from the SEN register in discussion with you. They can, if necessary, be re-added at a later date.

The tiered graduated response



Assess, Plan, Do and Review (APDR)



How will school support my child?

Our SENCo oversees all support and progress of any child requiring additional help across the school. Support and intervention varies and will be based on your child's individual needs. All children have targets that are set by the class teachers based on their individual learning needs. Some children with SEND may need additional and more specific targets, to meet their needs.

Support and intervention at our school includes class teacher input, via excellent targeted classroom teaching – Universal Quality First Teaching.

For your child this would mean:

- That the teacher has the highest possible expectation for your child and all pupils in their class.
- That all teaching is built on what your child already knows, can do and can understand.
- That different ways of teaching are in place, so that your child is fully engaged and motivated in the learning in the class. This may involve a more practical way of learning for example.
- That specific strategies are put into place to support your child to learn effectively.
- Your child's teacher will have carefully checked on your child's progress and will have decided that your child has a gap or gaps in the understanding/learning and requires extra support to help them make the best possible progress.



Additional support

Additional support is intervention which may take place either in a small group, 1 to 1 or through use of specific resources. This may happen in the classroom or a group room and could be led by a teacher, teaching assistant (TA) or Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA). The school offer a variety of interventions which support your child's development academically, emotionally and socially. Staff are trained to deliver specific interventions to meet a range of needs. These may include:

- Individual Literacy Intervention (ILI)
- ELSA support groups and 1:1
- Daily Reading
- 1:1 Specific target work
- Lego Therapy

Some children may need extra specialist support in school from a professional outside of the school community. This may be from Local Authority support services, such as the Autism and Social Communication Team, Occupational Therapy or Speech and Language Services etc.

What could happen?

You will be asked for your permission for the school to refer your child to a specialist professional, e.g. a Speech and Language Therapist and an Early Help Assessment (EHA) will need to be completed. This will help everyone to further understand your child's particular needs and be able to support them more effectively in school. If accepted by the relevant service, the specialist will work with the school and family to better understand their needs and make recommendations as to how support is given to your child in the most effective and efficient way.

What specialist services and expertise are available to support your child?

We work closely with many external agencies that support individual children's needs within our school. These include: GP, School Nurse, Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Educational Psychologist, the Virtual School Access To Inclusion Service which includes the Learning Support Advisory Team, the Autism and Social Communication Advisory Service, the Access and Assistive Technology Team (for Physical Impairment, Medical Support and Assistive Technology eg use of I.T.), the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and paediatricians.

We also work with a range of further support services including Parent Family Support Advisors within the WLT and Somerset's Family Intervention Service and Children's Social Care. Our Safeguarding Lead and SENCO work together when a pupil with SEN has a Safeguarding need.

If it is decided that your child may benefit from a support from a specialist service, then they will be referred by the SENCO (or Safeguarding Lead if appropriate). An Early Help Assessment or Team around the Family meeting may take place where the full range of available help will be discussed. Although we may make a referral, it is important to be aware that increasingly high thresholds and changes to services for acceptance meant that not all requests are accepted.



How will the school judge what impact the support has had on my child?

As a school we measure children's progress in learning against national age-related expectations. The class teacher will continually assess each child and note areas where they are improving and where further support is needed. We track children's progress from their admission

through to Year 4, using a variety of different methods, including assessment under the National Curriculum and some standardised tests, as appropriate. Children who are not making expected progress are identified through termly Pupil Progress Meetings. From this, pupils are identified and interventions are put into place according to areas of concerns. Children will be tracked to ensure progress is being made and new targets set etc. When a child's plan is reviewed, comments are made to show what progress has been made. If the child has not met the target, the reasons for this will be discussed, then the target may be adapted into smaller steps or a different approach may be used to ensure the child does make progress.



Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Occasionally, when a child is continuing to demonstrate a significant cause for concern, despite intervention over time or their learning need is complex and persistent, a statutory assessment will be considered. This can only happen once all in school and available external support services advice through the graduated response processes have been implemented. If a statutory assessment is required, the school, in consultation with the child, parents and outside agencies, will submit reports for consideration by the Local Authority's (Somerset County Council) SEND Panel.

If your child is identified as having significant or complex SEND, we will meet termly and then you will be invited annually to a full review meeting. At this meeting, the SENCo, class teacher, teaching assistant and any other professionals involved in your child's care will review your child's progress and set new targets.

What if my child has SEN and is not able to attend school?

Children with SEN still have to come to school. If you have problems with this, we will work with you to find way so to overcome this. Our aim is always to find a way to get your child back into school as soon as possible. If your child is ill, you must inform the school. If your child is unable to attend school due to a medical need, we will work with you to provide an appropriate level of education during your child's necessary absence.

In the event of the school having concerns about a child's attendance, we have a duty of care to respond to this appropriately. This may involve professionals from the WLT, Social Services or the Police

How will you help me to support my child's learning?

The class teacher or the SENCo can offer advice and practical ways that you can help your child at home. We use 'Class Dojo' as an easy and effective two way communication system between the class teacher and parents. However, if necessary, in addition to this, the class teacher can provide a home/school communication book. Your child will bring this home with them daily so that comments from the parents and the teacher can be shared.



If your child is on the school's special needs register, they will have individual targets and these will be discussed with you termly. Recommendations from external agencies, e.g. a Speech and Language Therapist will be shared with you so that strategies can be implemented at home and school. If a class teacher needs to discuss an issue with you, it will be done privately and strategies to support your child will be offered. If your child has an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) a formal meeting will take place annually to review your child's progress. We also invite parents to information meetings in school, where we explain how we teach certain areas of the curriculum, e.g. phonics or maths.

What is the pastoral, medical and social support available in the school to ensure my child's over-all wellbeing?

We have a caring, understanding ethos and are an inclusive school. We welcome and celebrate diversity, and believe that high self-esteem is crucial to children's well-being. As a nurturing school, all our vulnerable pupils are known to staff. The classrooms offer an open-door policy. Entrances are staffed with an adult who greets and welcomes children each morning. This ensures smooth transition between home and school each day. The Class Teacher has overall responsibility for the pastoral, medical and social care of every child in their class, therefore, this should be your first point of contact. If further support is required, the class teacher will liaise with the SENCo, or Safeguarding Lead if appropriate, for further advice and support. Staff members are available to support pastorally. This support is tailored to meet individual need.



How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including day to day and residential trips?

We aim for all children to be included on school day trips and residential stays and those who wish to join in extra-curricular activities to be able to do so. We will provide necessary adaptations, having consulted with you, to ensure that this is successful. A risk assessment is carried out prior to any off-site activity to ensure that everyone's health and safety is not compromised. In the unlikely event that it is considered unsafe for a child to take part in an activity, we will always explore different options to include the child.

How does the school manage the administration of medicines and personal care?

We have policies and procedures in place regarding the administration of medicines and management of personal/intimate care in school. Parents are required to contact the office if medication needs to be taken during the school day and the appropriate forms need to be completed. The administration of medication is overseen by specific members of staff. If a child's health care needs are longer term, a medical or Health Care Plan will need to be put into place. This will be done by health care professionals, parents and the school SENCO. Staff receive regular training regarding conditions and medications affecting individual children so that all staff can manage a medical situation should the need arise, for example, diabetes/epi pen training. If a child should require personal care, a Personal and Intimate Care Plan will be put into place and staff will receive appropriate training so that they can undertake this level of care sufficiently.



How accessible is the school environment?

The school is wheelchair accessible and we have a disabled toilet for those children who may need one. Please visit the school website to view the Accessibility Plan for more information.

How will the school prepare and support my child when joining the school or transferring to a new school?

We recognise that 'moving on' can be difficult for a child with SEND and we take various steps to ensure that this transition is as smooth as possible. We encourage all new children to visit the school prior to starting with us. For children with SEN who are moving on to middle school at the end of Year 4 or children who move elsewhere at different points in their school life, we liaise closely with their next setting and/or hold transition meetings. We offer additional transition days to the next school if a child is feeling apprehensive or feel that it would be beneficial to make the transition a smoother process.

We liaise closely with staff when receiving and transferring children from and to different schools, ensuring all relevant paperwork is passed on and all needs are discussed and understood. The SENCO would liaise with the previous or following SENCO. If your child has an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) and is moving to a new school, we will, whenever possible, arrange a review meeting with relevant staff from the receiving school.

How are the school Governors involved, and what are their responsibilities?

The SENCO reports to the Governors annually to inform them about the progress of children with SEN; this report does not refer to individual pupils and confidentiality is maintained at all times. There is a named Governor who is responsible for SEN and will meet with the SENCO at specific times during the academic year. This 'SEN link Governor' also reports to the Governing committees in order to keep all Governors informed. The SENCO informs Governors of any recent changes in SEN policies both nationally, locally and also school based.

Finally, remember if you have any concerns that your child may have SEN.....

Talk to us – in the first instance contact your child's Class teacher. If you still have questions or concerns, you can contact the School SENCO, Mrs Sue Ham or the Head Teacher. We pride ourselves on building positive relationships with open and honest with parents/carers and hope that you are the same with us.

Look at our Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy, SEN School Offer and Accessibility Plan which are all available on our school website and also the Somerset Local Authority Offer [What to expect from education \(somerset.gov.uk\)](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/what-to-expect-from-education)



Who else can I contact outside of the school environment?

- Somerset Parent Carer Forum is an independent group of parent carers who have joined together to share information, their views alongside the experiences of the children's/young person's services (0 – 25 years) they already use or would like to use in the future.

Phone: 01278 699397

Email: help@somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk

- Somerset SENDIAS is an organisation that provides independent advice and support for families.

Phone: 01823 355578

Email: somersetSENDIAS@somerset.gov.uk



Somerset SENDIAS
Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support

Who should I contact if I am considering whether my child should join the school?

You can contact the school office to arrange to meet with the Headteacher and have a tour of the school. If your child has an identified or potential special educational need or disability, you can also arrange to meet with the SENCO Sue Ham who will discuss how the school could meet your child's needs.

Phone: 01934 732270

Email: office@weareacademy.co.uk

Useful websites

Somerset Local Offer: www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer

Somerset Parent Carer Partnership: www.somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk

SENDIAS: [Somerset SENDIAS](#)

NHS Somerset: www.somersetft.nhs.uk

Hearing Impairment: www.ndcs.org.uk

www.signature.org.uk

Vision Impairment: www.somersetsight.org.uk

www.rnib.org.uk

Autism: www.autism.org.uk

www.autismsomerset.org.uk

ADHD: <https://adhdfoundation.org.uk/>

Mental Health: <https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>



Learning Knows No Bounds