

What is SEND?

SEND stands for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The current 2014 special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years states that a child has a special educational need if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. It states that a child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others the same age, or
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of the facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

How are children identified?

Your child's progress will be discussed with you on a regular basis, informally and also formally at parents' evenings throughout the year. The class teacher will already have spoken to you if they have any concerns about your child.

Every effort is made to identify children with SEND early so the appropriate level of support and intervention can be put in place. If the class teacher has concerns about your child's progress, compared to the progress of others in the class, they will first discuss these concerns with the SENCo. Discussions are based on both formal and informal assessment of your child through observation, monitoring data and working with your child.

If after discussion and looking at your child's work it is agreed that your child may have Special Educational Needs, you will be invited into school to speak to either the class teacher and/or the SENCo. The school will then follow the graduated response to meeting pupils' needs as set out in the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Through discussion with you, your child will be placed on the Special Educational Needs register. Specific targets will then be set, extra support will be provided to help them to reach these targets and, if appropriate, outside agencies may be requested to become involved. These targets will be reviewed at least 3 times a year.

What is a SEND register?

This is a list of all children within school who have Special Educational Needs and/or a disability. Some children, at times during their school life, need a little more support than their peers to achieve their full potential and are placed on the SEND register. This enables the SENCo to monitor these children and make sure that they receive the extra help they need within school. Some children remain on the register throughout their primary school years as they have significant needs but others only need the help for a short time as, with extra intervention, they close the gap between their own progress and that of their peers. As soon as a child is working within the same levels as the other children in the class they will be removed from the register. Their progress, however, in common with all other pupils', will continue to be regularly monitored through pupil progress meetings.

What is an IEP / ALM?

Once your child has been placed on the Special Educational Needs register, we will meet with you to set specific targets for them. The targets are written up as an IEP (an Individual Education Plan), which we refer to in school as an Active Learning Mat. You will be given a copy to sign and keep at home and your child will have a copy to refer to in their learning packs at school. The Active Learning Mat identifies the short-term targets and next steps for your child. It explains how your child will be helped to achieve the targets, the resources to be used and the expected outcome from specific interventions / extra help.

These targets will be written and discussed with you and your child. You and your child will be invited to a meeting, with the SENCo/class teacher at least 3 times a year to review these targets and discuss new targets to be set.

At Monkshouse School we believe that it is very important for home and school to work together and communicate regularly in order to provide the best support possible for each individual child.

What is a Statement of Special Educational Need / An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?

The majority of children who have Special Educational Needs can be supported through the use of school resources and with the help of outside agencies.

A child is only given an Education, Health and Care Plan (an EHC plan) by the local authority if they are deemed to have significant and complex difficulties and/or a disability and their needs cannot be met within school without significant additional resources and/or funding beyond the school's normal resources.

Once the decision has been made to ask for extra support from the local authority, and after discussion with the parent/carer, school will make a 'Request for Statutory Assessment'. The Local Authority will then request to see as much evidence as possible from school, home and any outside agencies working with the child, about the child's specific needs, what support has already been put in place and the impact of this support over a period of time. If they feel that support for the child cannot be met through normal school resources, the local authority will issue an Education, Health and Care Plan (an EHC plan).

SEND Reforms

The Department for Education have made changes to how children with SEND and their families are supported and these changes came into effect from September 2014.

They change the ways we work in school and improve communication between professionals and families.

The main changes were:

- replacing the statement of Special Educational Need with an EHC plan (Education, Health and Care plan). This can be in place for a young person from ages 0-25.
- giving parents and young people with an EHC plan the option of a personal budget to extend choice and control over their support.
- requiring local authorities to set out a 'local offer' of what support they expect to be available for children and young people with SEND.
- changing the SEND Code of Practice. A revised SEND Code of Practice was put in place in September 2014.
- new and explicit requirements around the involvement of children, young people and parents in decisions about SEND provision.
- requiring education and health services to work much more closely together to support children with Special Educational Needs.