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Meopham Community Academy

Special Educational Needs Information Report 2020-21

What is the local offer?

The Children and Families Bill came into force in September 2014. From this date, Local Authorities and schools are required to publish and keep under review information about all services they expect to be available for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) aged 0-25. This is called the 'Local Offer'.

The intention of the Local Offer is to provide choice and transparency for families. It is also an important resource for parents in understanding the range of services and provision available for them in the local area.

The school SEN Information Report

This report outlines how the needs of SEN pupils are met, as determined by school policy, and the range of provision we offer.

What is the definition of SEN?

The SEND Code of Practice: for 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2014) defines SEN as follows:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

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

My child has Special Educational Needs. What can Meopham Community Academy offer me?

At Meopham Community Academy we recognise that every child is different and, therefore, the educational needs of every child are different; this is certainly the case for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or Disabilities.

A child's difficulty may relate to one or more of the four areas below:

- Communication and interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, emotional & mental health difficulties
- Sensory or physical needs

Specific difficulties include: Speech and language delay, social communication difficulties, anxiety/low self-esteem, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD),



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attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), attention deficit disorder (ADD), general learning difficulties (GLD), sensory processing difficulties, dyslexia and dyspraxia.

The following pages will give you further information about the Local Offer from Meopham Community Academy and how we can support your child.

1. Who are the best people to speak to about my child's special educational need?

Class teacher

In the first instance you should speak to your child's class teacher. The class teacher is responsible for:

- Tracking the progress your child is making through identifying, planning and delivering any extra help they may need. This could be support from a teaching assistant or additional group/individual support from the teacher in class.
- Sharing pupil progress targets, provision maps and pupil plans with parents.
- Delivering personalised quality first teaching to your child.
- Embedding the school's Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy in their daily teaching.

It is likely that the class teacher will have discussed any concerns with the school's Inclusion Manager who co-ordinates all aspects of the school's work relating to special educational needs and/or disabilities. Sometimes the Inclusion Manager is known as the SENCo (Special Needs Coordinator).

Inclusion manager (SENCo)

Our school SENCo is Mrs Johanna Brown. **Mrs Brown can be contacted via the school office on 01474 812259 or office@meophamca.com**

Mrs Brown is responsible for:

- Developing and reviewing the school's SEND policy.
- Coordinating all the support throughout the school for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including budgeting for this provision.
- Ensuring that you are informed about, and involved in, supporting your child's learning and progress.
- Liaising with all the other people who may come into school to help your child, e.g. Speech Therapists, Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teachers.
- Updating the school's SEN Register (a record of all the children in school with special educational needs) and making sure accurate records are kept.
- Providing support and guidance for teachers and support staff in the school so they can help every child in school reach their full potential.



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The SEN Governors are Helena Gula and Clair Barden

The SEN Governors are responsible for:

- Ensuring the necessary support is provided for any child with special educational needs who attends our school.

They can be contacted via the school office.

2. What types of SEN support are available for my child at Meopham Community Academy?

As advised by Kent Education authority, the school adopts a graduated response to Special Educational Needs provision.

The Meopham Community Academy provision map details how this is provided. You can access it by clicking on this [link](#).

When a child is identified as needing additional support, it is planned by the relevant Meopham Community Academy staff members working alongside the child and their parents. Where necessary, further help can be sought from outside agencies through the Local Inclusion Forum Team. This may involve advice from professionals, including specialist teachers, speech and language therapists or an educational psychologist. In some cases, parents may be advised to seek further advice from their GP who may then refer to a paediatrician.

Once a child's needs have been identified, interventions are planned to address this area of need. Provision maps are used to track the impact of the interventions. Targeted support may be given in the form of additional resources, adaptations to classwork, small group work or 1:1 support from a Learning Support Assistant.

If a child's needs require a higher level of support the child will be given an Individual Support Plan. This plan will detail strategies that help the child to learn well. In addition, it will identify the planned long-term outcomes for the child and the interventions which will be put in place to meet them. The child will be given a SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, timed) target for each intervention so that progress can be tracked. The plan is written in collaboration with the child and the child's family, with a focus on the process of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review.'

Children with more complex educational needs may receive support through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). An EHCP is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains what extra help that will be required to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person to achieve what they want to in their life. The plan is drawn up by the local authority after an EHCP needs assessment. An EHCP plan is for children who require intensive, long term support.

3. What should I do if I am concerned about my child's progress at school?

If you are concerned about how your child is getting on at school, your first point of contact is the class teacher. If you continue to be concerned that your child is not making progress, or has needs that are not being supported, you should then speak to the SENCo.



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4. How will the school let me know if they have any concerns about my child's learning or progress at school?

At Meopham Community Academy we regularly monitor children's learning and track progress. If any aspect of your child's progress or well-being is causing concern you will be informed by the class teacher. In some cases, the class teacher may seek advice from the SENCo who may then contact you to discuss any difficulties that your child may be experiencing.

5. How is extra support allocated to children with SEN?

The inclusion manager, in consultation with the head teacher and senior leadership team, decide how extra support should be allocated. This is done on the basis of need.

6. Who provides support for children with SEN in school?

School provision

Class teachers regularly support individuals and small groups in the classroom.

The SENCO provides advice and support to teachers and teaching assistants as to how to meet a child's needs. She also works with groups of children to provide targeted support.

We have an experienced team of support staff led the SENCO. The team consists of teaching assistants, who provide support both in class and in small groups, and mentors, who each specialise in a particular area of SEN. Mentors support children individually and in small groups and provide advice to teachers on strategies for supporting children with specific educational needs.

Our mentor team:

Miss Sayers – Learning Mentor

Mrs Winter - Social Communication Mentor (supports children with ASD- Autistic Spectrum disorder)

Miss Morgan – Family Liaison Officer

A play therapist / counsellor is employed on a part-time basis to provide emotional support for children who need it.

External agencies

In some cases, advice and/or support may be sought from external agencies. These may include:

- The Specialist Teaching Service (via referral to the Local Inclusion Forum Team)
- CAMHS / CYPMHS
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Visual/Hearing Impairment Advisory Teachers
- Educational Psychology Service



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7) How are the teachers in school supported in helping children with SEN, and what training do they have?

The school provides continual professional development opportunities for training and support for all staff to improve the teaching and learning of children, including those with SEND. In addition, the inclusion manager organises staff training to ensure that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to support specific learning difficulties. The inclusion manager provides advice and support to class teachers as to how to make classrooms as inclusive as possible and meet the needs of children with SEND.

The inclusion manager regularly attends training to ensure she is kept up to date with recent developments in supporting SEND, this information is then shared with the staff team.

8) How will class teaching be adapted for my child with SEND?

Class teachers plan their lessons and activities according to the specific needs and abilities of the children in their class. They will aim to ensure your child's individual needs are met and that every child can achieve their best.

The school has a team of teaching assistants and mentors who support a wide variety of needs. These assistants work under the direction of the class teacher and Inclusion Manager to support the class teaching and deliver specific intervention programmes.

9) How will the school measure the progress of my child in school?

Every child's progress is continually monitored by his/her class teacher. Children's progress in Reading, Writing and Maths is formally reviewed with the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Manager three times a year. Intervention may be planned for children whose progress causes concern.

Children who are identified as needing intervention are given individual SMART targets linked to their area of need. These are then used to monitor their progress. Class teachers share this information with parents at consultation meetings.

Parents of children with individual education plans are invited to meet the inclusion manager three times a year to review progress.

The progress of children with an EHCP (or Statement of SEN) is reviewed three times a year, including a formal annual review which is reported to the Kent SEN team. All adults involved in the child's education are invited to the annual review.

10) What support is available for me as a parent of a child with special needs?

Your child's class teacher will be regularly available to discuss your child's progress or any other concerns you have.

School reports are simple and accessible and are sent home at the end of Term 6. Parent consultation evenings are held three times each year.

Mrs Brown (Inclusion Manager) can offer advice and support. She can be contacted via the school office.



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Miss Morgan is our Family Liaison Officer. She can offer support with issues such as attendance, school anxiety and behaviour issues. Where necessary she can also seek support from outside agencies.

Mrs Winter is our social communication mentor. She can provide advice for parents of children with ASD. She can also provide information about parent courses and groups offering support for parents of children with ASD.

As well as contact with us at school, there is other support available for you:

Information Advice and Support Kent (IASK) provides impartial advice, support and information for parents and carers with children/young people who have special needs. They have a confidential helpline, and can support with home visits, attending meetings, guiding you through SEN processes and filling in paperwork. The telephone number is 03000 413000

11) How is Meopham Community Academy accessible to children with special educational needs or disabilities?

The school follows all guidelines and legal requirements set out in the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act), 1995.

As part of the Equality Act 2010, a disability is defined as follows:

‘A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day to day activities.’

12) How will my child’s special needs be supported when joining/leaving the school, and when moving from one year group to another?

At Meopham Community Academy we endeavour to ensure a smooth transition for pupils entering school in Year R from pre-schools. Pupils and parents need to feel happy, comfortable, reassured and confident to face the challenge of starting a new school. We recognise that pupils are vulnerable at stages of transition. We implement a range of strategies and activities to ensure a smooth and happy transition.

We offer a gradual induction programme, where children are invited to afternoon story sessions and longer play sessions in the term before they are due to start school. We support the children during these sessions as they begin to familiarise themselves with the school staff, the environment and other pupils (they can be supported by carers or parents if appropriate).

The school invites parents to their own welcome session where we explain what they and the pupils can expect when they first start school. Basic routines and expectations are discussed, as well as specific information about the Foundation Stage. Home school links are further established by home visits in the first week of Term 1.

Home visits

Where possible, the Reception teachers and teaching assistants visit children and their parents at home to meet the pupils where they are comfortable. This is an opportunity for parents to explain any additional needs that their child may have.



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Communication with pre-schools

The Reception teachers liaise with pre-schools to find out information about the pupils who will be joining the Academy.

Children with SEND beginning their transition from a pre-school setting to Meopham Community Academy .

For a child with an Additional Medical Need the school SENCO or a school mentor may visit the pre-school to speak with the child's keyworker or observe the child.

Parents of children with Educational Health Care Plans, Individual Education plans or significant additional needs are offered a school planning meeting in the summer before their child starts school so that school, professionals involved and family are able to prepare for the child's arrival.

Moving to secondary school

To support children with SEND who are moving to secondary school the Year 6 class teachers and SENCO meet with the staff and SENCO of the receiving school to discuss the SEN child's needs and how best to facilitate the child's access to the school and curriculum.

In some cases, in addition to the taster days provided by secondary school, children with SEND may have additional visits to their secondary school accompanied by a parent or a member of the academy staff.

Moving from one year group to another.

All children visit new classes with their new teacher in Term 6 at least once. Class teachers have staff meeting time allocated to discuss individual children's progress as they move from class to class. At this meeting the child's current teacher ensures that relevant information about children's Additional Educational Needs (including essential medical information) is passed onto the next teacher. Where children have individual education plans, these are passed to the new class teacher. The plans identify any strategies or resources that the new teacher may need to use to help the child learn well.

Children in need of extra support with transition

Children with SEND may require additional support with transition. One of support team will arrange an informal visit to meet the new class teacher and visit their new classroom. The child will then be given the opportunity to discuss any worries/concerns they may have.

13) How will my child's social and emotional development be supported?

At Meopham Community Academy we aim to help all children develop social skills and resilience. As a values-based school we promote respect, tolerance and diversity. Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) provision is embedded across the curriculum, and underpins the ethos of our school.

We have an effective pupil support team based in the Magnolia room. This team are experienced in supporting children who need help to manage their feelings or behaviour. This can involve individual support or group work e.g. Lego therapy, social skills groups.



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Children who find playtimes challenging can be directed to supported play which is a smaller, nurturing environment. In addition, we encourage peer support through playground friends and peer mediators.

14) Who can I contact if I have a complaint about the SEN provision made for my child?

Initially we would ask you to speak with your child's teacher or the Inclusion Manager. If there are still concerns, please contact the Headteacher to resolve the issue before making the complaint formal to the chair of the governing body.