



The Blyth Academy

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Wellbeing Centre

Special Educational Needs

Additional Information for Parents and Carers



What are Special Educational Needs?

A special educational need can be a number of different things. For example, your child may be having problems with reading, numeracy or communication, which school can help with by putting extra support in at school and by working in partnership with yourself. It may also be due to a disability which makes it harder for a child to use the same educational facilities that the school provides for the majority of children. For some children this may be a temporary difficulty, while others may have a long term need for special help.

Types of special educational needs can include:

- ❖ General Learning Difficulties – children whose learning progresses at a slower pace
- ❖ Speech and Language Difficulties
- ❖ Social, Emotional and/or Mental Health Difficulties
- ❖ Dyslexia (difficulties with reading, writing, spelling and organisational skills)
- ❖ Dyspraxia (problems with motor skills, organisation)
- ❖ Dyscalculia (difficulties with number work)
- ❖ Autism (ASD)
- ❖ ADD/ADHD (Attention Deficit Disorder / Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)
- ❖ Tourette's Syndrome
- ❖ Cerebral Palsy
- ❖ Other Physical/Medical Needs

Did you know?

At one point in their lives up to 20% of children/young people (1 in 5) need support for a Special Educational Need.

How do schools help children with Special Educational Needs?

Children learn and develop in different ways. Teachers recognise this and use different teaching styles, resources and plan different levels of work in the classroom to cater for the various ways children learn. This is called Quality First Teaching and is something schools must provide for all children. However, many children, at some time in their school life, need extra help.



Because of this, schools/academies must:

- ❖ Talk to parents/carers if they think their child has a special educational need and let them know what special help the school/academy is giving
- ❖ Appoint a member of staff as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)
- ❖ Have a written Special Educational Needs policy – a copy should be made available for parents
- ❖ Take account of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice. This is advice given to schools by the government which outlines what schools should do to support pupils with SEN and gives recommendations for good practice
- ❖ Publish a Local Offer/SEN Report, outlining the provision offered.

Schools recognise that you, as your child's parent/carer, are the expert on them and will involve you every step of the way.

What does the SENCO do?

SENCO = Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

If your child has Special Educational Needs the SENCO should:

- ❖ Ensure the right support is put in place for your child
- ❖ Advise other teachers on how to help your child
- ❖ Arrange training for staff so they understand your child's needs
- ❖ Work closely with you on a regular basis to talk with you about your child's needs and listen to any ideas or concerns you might have
- ❖ Work with other professionals (if necessary) who may be able to help your child, e.g. speech and language therapist /medical professional/ educational psychologist

How are Special Educational Needs identified?

The first person to identify that a child has special educational needs may be:

- ❖ Yourself, as parent or carer
- ❖ The form tutor



- ❖ The subject teacher
- ❖ A Teaching and Learning Assistant
- ❖ A Head of Year
- ❖ A medical professional

If it seems that your child may have special educational needs, the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) will assess:

- ❖ What your child is good at and what they need help with
- ❖ What your child would benefit from learning
- ❖ How best to help your child learn

Information about your child's targets and any extra support they receive at school may be recorded on a PSP (Personal Support Plan) or an IEP (Individual Educational Plan).

Children thought to have special educational needs will be placed on the school's special educational needs register and receive one of two levels of support:

- ❶ SEN Support
- ❷ Education, Health and Care Assessment /Statement

The level of support received may change throughout their time at school. Academy staff will speak to you if they think this should happen and will ask you for your opinion about this.

What is an Individual Education Plan or Personal Support Plan?

A Personal Support Plan says what the school, the subject teachers and the SENCO plan to do to help your child learn. All teachers should be aware that children learn in different ways. Some need to work at a slower pace to ensure they fully understand one thing before they move onto something new.

An Individual Education Plan / Personal Support plan will be written especially for your child if they have a Statement of SEN or have an EHC plan.



What is Student Support?

If your child is at the level of Student Support these are some of the things you can expect from our academy:

- ❖ Your child's class / subject teachers will be finding ways to support them in class such as:
 - Changing the way lessons are planned and delivered
 - Matching activities to the ability / need of your child (differentiation)
 - Adapting learning materials such as worksheets, books and activities to suit your child's needs
- ❖ Small group support
- ❖ The teacher will work in partnership with you and the SENCO to find ways to support your child with their needs, including giving you ideas on how you can help your child at home.

For many children this action will be enough to support your child with any difficulties and will help them make progress.

There will be a cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review to ascertain whether your child is making good progress.

Where your child might need more help, the academy and the SENCO may suggest further support ►

- ❖ The academy may seek additional advice from outside specialists such as health professionals, specialist teachers or educational psychologists who would:
 - Carry out further assessment of your child's needs
 - Provide advice to the academy on how to best support your child
 - Suggest resources that would help your child make progress
- ❖ Your views will be important in planning for your child's education. Progress will be reviewed regularly either at Parents' Evenings or during review meetings with the academy SENCO.

This extra support may be enough to support your child with any difficulties sufficiently to ensure that progress can be made in school.

A very small number of children (about 2%) may need further support and the academy may suggest applying for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment ►



What is an Education, Health and Care needs assessment?

If your child's needs are very complex and/or severe the school may ask the Local Authority to carry out an Education, Health and Care needs assessment:

- ❖ This is a very detailed assessment of your child's needs. Parents or carers, the school and a range of professionals will all be asked to provide written reports.
- ❖ At the end of the assessment phase the Local Authority will consider these reports to help decide whether or not to issue an Education, Health and Care Plan for your child.
- ❖ As a parent/carer you also have the right to ask the Local Authority to carry out this assessment although it is usually best if you can do this with the support of the school.

An Education, Health and Care needs assessment is only appropriate for a small number of children.

An EHC plan is the document which replaces Statements of SEN for children and young people with special educational needs.

EHC plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

Most children who have an existing Statement of SEN will transfer onto an EHC Plan, following the schedule implemented by Northumberland County Council.

If your child has an EHC plan the academy must:

- ❖ Hold an annual review meeting to which you and professionals must be invited.
- ❖ Provide your child with the full range of support specified in their statement or EHC plan. This may be group or individual support or even the staff planning for specialist work.

We hope this information has helped you to understand how The Blyth Academy supports children with Special Educational Needs.

If you would like to talk to someone about your child's needs please call or email SEND@theblythacademy.org



The Blyth Academy

If you are concerned that your child's Special Educational Needs aren't being met or your child isn't making progress, please talk to Ms. Coathup about the support for your child.

You can find additional information regarding our provision for children with SEN in the 'Supporting Children' area of our website. This can be found within the 'Academy in Action' section. You can also find information in our Local Offer and in our SEN Policy, both of which are available within the 'About' section of our website.

Thank you for working with us to help your child enjoy school and enjoy learning.

If you would like any independent support or advice about any aspect of your child's Special Educational Needs please contact the Northumberland SEND Information, Advice and Support Service.

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