If you need help to read this booklet please telephone 01904 554562.

If you would like this information in an accessible format (for example in large print, on tape or by email) or another language please telephone: 01904 551550.

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Gill Milner and Gillian Bucklow Parent Partnership Officers
Guide to School Action and School Action Plus

The purpose of this leaflet is to explain briefly how provision is made in school for children with additional needs, also called Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND).

More information is available in ‘SEN: A Guide for Parents and Carers’, a free Department for Education booklet which is available in various languages (tel 0845 602 2260 to order)

You are welcome to contact us for further information or advice:

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Introduction

If you or school are concerned that your child is not making adequate progress, it is possible that he or she may have additional needs, which make it harder for him or her to learn than most children of the same age.

A special educational need can be a number of different things. For example, your child may be having problems with reading, maths or behaviour, 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 school can help with by making reasonable adjustments, to ensure equal access 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.

As many as 1 in 5 children have special educational needs at some stage in their time at nursery or school.

Schools have a duty to inform parents and consult with them if their child has special educational needs and tell them of the extra or different help being offered. Schools should have a written SEN policy and the governors should report annually to parents on this policy. They must also appoint a teacher as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

Funding

Each year City of York Council allocates government funds directly to York schools for children with additional needs.

The money given to schools for named pupils with SEN Statements must be used for this specific purpose.

However, the rest of the SEN budget and other delegated funds are not set aside for named pupils in the same way as money for children with Statements.

Governors are expected to use these funds in a flexible manner to improve outcomes for all children with special and additional needs. These outcomes are monitored by the local authority to help schools ensure that these pupils receive appropriate provision.

The governors and headteacher should be able to demonstrate to parents that funds are used in this way rather than more generally within the school.

If you have any queries about SEN provision, please speak to your headteacher, the SEN/Inclusion Co-ordinator, or to City of York Council SEN Services.
In school, who may identify if my child has additional needs?

- the teacher
- parents
- self-referral by a pupil
- medical professional

How do schools help children with Special Educational Needs?

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

Statutory Assessment by the local authority is carried out for a very small number of children with severe learning difficulties or complex needs.

It is only necessary if the school cannot provide the level of help that your child needs on a School Action Plus programme.

It involves a detailed assessment of your child in order for the local authority to decide whether or not to issue a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

A Statement of SEN is a legal document which describes all your child’s special educational needs and gives details of the support your child should receive.

Further details are available from school or City of York Council SEN Services (tel 01904 554319)

What can the SENCO or teacher do to help?

The SENCO or teacher will:

• co-ordinate a meeting with you to discuss your child’s special educational needs
• plan future support, known as School Action or School Action Plus
• ensure that appropriate records are kept of your child’s progress
• advise and support other members of staff in the school
• 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 may have

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

A School Action programme of support is supervised by the class teacher and may involve individual or small group work. The SENCO will ensure that class teachers have relevant information, advice and strategies to support your child’s needs. The class teacher and SENCO will monitor your child’s progress.
Examples of the type of support that pupils might receive at School Action Plus:

- class work and homework ‘differentiated’ and set at an appropriate level
- access to extra support in the classroom from a teaching assistant
- withdrawal for small group work eg 20 minutes twice weekly
- advice from therapists for teachers and teaching assistants about how to deliver a programme of speech and language, physiotherapy support or occupational therapy
- support from an educational psychologist, inclusion development teacher, specialist teacher, behaviour support teacher or education welfare officer
- counselling, mentoring or sessions in a nurture group or friendship group
- advice and support from the Lime Trees Child Adolescent and Family Unit or additional medical support time
- up to 15 hours of teaching assistant support

The type of help offered may include:

- 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
- a teaching assistant working with your child within the class or in a small group
- special equipment such as a desk with a sloping top, pencils grips, reading rulers
- a volunteer reading with your child
- a pupil with emotional or behaviour difficulties having an Individual Behaviour Plan
- lunchtime and after-school support with homework clubs

The class teacher will set **Individual Targets, these may be on an Individual Education Plan (IEP).** The school’s provision for children with SEN can be seen on the school’s provision map, completed by the SENCO. It is good practice for schools to share copies of IEPs/Provision Maps with parents/carers.

In Primary School there will be details of:

- three or four short-term targets for your child
- what special help will be given and how often
- who will provide the help
- how and when your child’s progress will be checked
- what help you can give your child at home
If there are concerns that your child is not making progress with support at School Action, the SENCO will seek further advice from support services outside the school.

School may decide to ask for help from a specialist teacher, an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or other health professionals.

The SENCO will take this advice into consideration when setting new targets. You will continue to be involved and your child’s progress will be regularly recorded and reviewed.

School Action will continue until it is no longer needed because your child is making adequate progress or it is decided, after a reasonable period, that your child needs additional support at School Action Plus.

Your school will have guidelines in place about how decisions are made to allocate additional support. You are welcome to talk to your SENCO about whether your child qualifies for extra help under School Action Plus arrangements.