

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Report



Oakmere Primary School

Date of issue: Revised March 2023

Oakmere Primary School SEN Information Report 2023

Oakmere Primary School is an inclusive school that embraces a variety of special educational needs. At Oakmere we believe that every child is an individual and that each and every one is valuable to our school community. Every child has the equal right to join in every area of school life and the right to learn, enjoy and progress within our environment. Our values reflect our commitment to a school where there are high expectations for everyone.

Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 and the Department for Education (DFE) guidance.

The Equality Act 2010 defines an individual as disabled if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on his or her ability to undertake normal day to day activities.

Definition of Special Educational Needs

Special Educational needs refers to a learning difficulty that requires special educational provision.

The SEN code of practice says that children have a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- Have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; Or
- Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in mainstream schools or post 16 institutions and
- Are under compulsory school age and are likely to fall within either of definitions above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children with Special Educational needs may need special provision to allow them to access school life, engage in learning and develop good mental health.

Most areas of need will fall under one (or more) of these categories:

Communication and interaction

- Speech, language and communication needs (SCLN)

Cognition and learning

- Severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple difficulties (PMLD), Specific learning difficulties (SPLD)

Social, mental and emotional health(SEMH)

- Children with SEMH difficulties may experience a variety of social and emotional struggles that can have a big impact on their well being. A child with SEMH may show signs of being withdrawn by isolating themselves and appearing very sad and/ or anxious. They may also present challenging behaviour, such as being disruptive and hyperactive during lessons.

Sensory and physical

- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Multi-sensory impairment
- Physical disability

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities/Inclusion Team is led by our Inclusion Coordinator (INCo)– Mrs Heena Gadhvi, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)- Mrs Caroline Gordon and our Wellbeing Champion-Miss Lyndsay Jennings. We employ a dedicated team of learning support assistants and we have a Play Therapist based at school one day a week.

1.How does the school know if children/young people need extra help and what should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

The school recognises the need for a graduated response to the identification and assessment of children who fall behind age appropriate expectations. This means that the response and provision will be suited to the current needs of your child and will change over time. These responses are recorded on your child's Assess Plan Do Review planners (documents that detail your child's needs and additional support).

We identify when children will need extra help:

- by monitoring our termly data in the core areas of English and maths
- through high quality teaching (as teachers continually assess your child's progress through marking, observation and feedback)
- by monitoring our teacher assessments across the curriculum
- by observing informally children in lessons and at play, seeing how they approach learning and socialising
- by discussing children's progress and learning with the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), the Headteacher, class teachers and teaching assistants
- by talking to parents and carers
- by talking to the children
- having termly pupil progress meetings
- talking to previous settings (if appropriate)

If you are concerned about your child's learning, or if your child has a disability, the first person to see is your child's class teacher. S/he will discuss your concerns with the SENCO to determine what course of action (if any) is required. We try to have an open door policy but if the teacher is unable to see you immediately, you can phone or come in to make an appointment with the class teacher. There is also the opportunity to discuss any issues at parent consultation evening.

Emphasis is placed on early identification of SEN in the Early Years Foundation Stage through home visits prior to admission. If your child has an identified special need before joining Oakmere School, as Early Years Team will work with you and the SENCO to ensure that everything is in place before your child joins us.

2. How will school staff support my child?

All children are supported in school by the Head Teacher, in ensuring that we are providing, whole class quality first teaching, high expectations for learning and behaviour. Teaching is monitored and developed continually and specific training, advice and support are put into place for both teachers and support staff as and when necessary.

Your child's teacher will develop a strong bond with your child. They will work with you to ensure that your child is happy and settled into school life at Oakmere. If the teacher has concerns about a pupil's learning, these will be raised with you during parent consultation, or sooner if appropriate.

At this stage, the child's needs will be accommodated through differentiation and scaffolding of work in the class and remain the class teacher's responsibility. This could mean:

- Having high expectations for learning and behaviour
- Teaching is built upon what the children know
- A variety of teaching methods are in place such as scaffolds and practical equipment
- Using specific strategies (which may be suggested by the SENCO) to support learning

The class teacher will direct teaching assistants to support in particular lessons. Our teaching assistants are at times deployed to support particular classes, as well as being trained to deliver additional and targeted support. This might be by use of programmed interventions or interventions individually tailored to address gaps in children's learning. In addition, the Wellbeing Champion delivers interventions to support a child with the development of their self-esteem, social skills and to support in behaviour choices.

In accordance with the SEN code of practice, Oakmere adopts a graduated approach to SEN provision determined by the support each individual child required. If your child needs support that is additional to differentiated high-quality teaching then they may need a support plan using the assess, plan, do, review, cycle. This is to be agreed by parents, the child and the class teacher and at times the SENCO. It will outline the adjustments, interventions and support to be in place as well as the desired impact. A date for review will be set.

It may be that a child will require significant support, such as the involvement of external agencies, to offer specialist advice or an educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). An EHCP is a legal document which describes a child or young persons special educational needs, the support they require and the outcomes they would like to achieve. This will be reviewed annually.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) co-ordinates all the special educational provision. The Headteacher and SENCO carry out Pupil Progress meetings with class teachers on a regular basis. The SENCO will support teachers with planning, monitoring and evaluating provision as well as co-ordinating support from external agencies such as Speech and language therapists, Occupational therapists, Educational psychologists, specialist advisory teachers. Families who are in receipt of advice from any one of these agencies will also have an opportunity to plan and review their learning targets with the SENCO, teacher and you, the parent or carer.

If the child is also looked after by the local authority, Mrs Gadhvi as the designated teacher for children looked after, will co-ordinate care at school and there will be termly PEP (Personal Education Plan) meetings where any Special Educational Needs and targets will be discussed and addressed.

3. How will I know how my child is doing?

Teachers at Oakmere Primary School will provide feedback to your child in a variety of different forms (verbal, written, whole class, group, individual etc.), to let them know how they are doing and to understand how they need to improve. We will always encourage pupils to express their views about what helps them with their learning.

There are twice yearly parents' evenings with the class teacher, where the teacher will share your child's work, their progress and their current needs. The SENCO can be available for a discussion if required. Parents and carers of children with an EHCP are invited to meet with the school-based professionals working with their child every term, to review and plan provision and agree desired outcomes and targets. Parents of children who are receiving support from external agencies are also invited in to plan and review the child's individual targets and progress once a term with the class teacher and SENCO where appropriate.

Those pupils who have been identified as having SEN support, have an Assess Plan Do Review planner, with individual targets as well as details of provision matching their needs. Children and parents are actively encouraged to share their views and to input into their plans.

Oakmere School issues an annual progress report for all pupils at the end of the year.

Parents/carers will be contacted by phone, email or school text message to pass on information, discuss specific issues or be invited to meetings.

Looked after children will also have regular progress meetings to discuss PEPs (Personal Education Plans).

4. How will the learning and development provision be matched to my child's needs?

Children at Oakmere Primary School learn in mixed ability classes. The teachers plan and provide differentiated work where necessary and adapt provision for children who receive SEN support. This differentiation means that the learning is suited to the child's current needs based on assessment of the children's learning. Teachers differentiate in a number of ways, such as:

- adjusting the structure of the lesson
- modelling and scaffolding the learning
- reasonable adjustments e.g. a writing slope, specialist equipment or coloured overlays
- adjusting seating plans
- adding support from peers and adults (small group, 1:1)
- pre-teaching vocabulary and concepts
- using IT and visual support
- over learning - repeating a skill or concept

Targets and programmes of learning suggested by external professionals (e.g. Educational Psychologist, the ASD team, Support teachers from The HIVE Outreach, from the SpLD Specialist Teacher Outreach Service at Parkside, Watling View Outreach) will be incorporated into the class work delivered by the class teacher and teaching assistants.

5. What support will there be for my child's overall wellbeing?

At Oakmere Primary School, children's overall well-being is a central aim. All children have the opportunity to see the Wellbeing Champion, for pastoral support and our behaviour policy ensures that every child's well-being is a focus. Our behaviour policy is modelled upon Hertfordshire STEPS and on a therapeutic positive approach. Adjustments of this policy for some children who receive SEND support are sometimes necessary but if this is the case, we will discuss this with you.

The whole school works hard to promote British Values and the school's values and all social and emotional aspects of learning.

We take many opportunities to celebrate children's achievements, including Star of the Week, Role models, and the use house points etc. We take every opportunity to expose children to as broad a range of life experiences as we can, from sports, art and music events to residential school trips.

Class teachers and Teaching Assistants give individual support to ensure each child feels safe and supported and our Inclusion team work to support the needs of each and every pupil as they progress through the school. Our SENCO is the Mental Health Lead and assigns our Wellbeing Champion to support pupils on an individual basis or in small groups. She helps children develop good communication skills, improved emotional literacy and can help children work through anxieties by providing practical strategies. Our Wellbeing Champion supports our PHSE curriculum in working with children to learn social skills and to develop strategies to understand and manage their own behaviour, through Zones of Regulation, for instance.

In school, we have a peer system, whereby 6 pupils are trained to support children on the playground. The peer mediators also help the younger children to join in with games. There is a variety of playground equipment which supports happy playtimes.

We have a number of qualified paediatric first-aiders on our staff, with designated staff on call at play and lunch times, to deal with first aid matters; all staff have annual Epi-pen/JEXT training.

6. What specialist services and expertise are available at or accessed by the school?

At Oakmere, the SENCO co-ordinates the specialist support of a number of external agencies, including the Educational Psychology Service, the Specific Learning Difficulties Base, behaviour support from The HIVE, the Communication Disorders Team and Watling View Outreach. We also access support from the health services, such as the School Nursing team, Speech and Language therapy and Occupational therapy.

Where the need arises, whole school staff meetings are dedicated to training staff in particular areas.

The SENCO regularly accesses best practice locally through local SENCO cluster meetings, as well as attending specific training to inform and update her practice. As well as outreach links with Hertsmere School Partnership, who support through access to family workers, we have very good links with the PB1 Family Centre, onsite, who run classes for parents and families.

7. What training have the staff, supporting children and young people with SEND, had or are having?

At Oakmere, all teaching and learning staff in the school support children with special educational needs. We provide an inclusive education and strive to ensure that all children have access to all opportunities in school, through putting in measures to decrease the individual barriers to achievement.

Our teachers continually work together to improve their teaching practice. If they need support in specific areas, this is supplemented by extra training or support from outside agencies through the SENCO. The teaching assistants are trained to deliver specific intervention programmes, in conjunction with Parkside SPLd base, for instance. They also receive training from the SENCO, who oversees the delivery of tailored interventions to address barriers to learning or gaps in understanding or knowledge.

The INCO Mrs Gadhvi and SENCO Caroline Gordon have gained the National Award for Special Educational Needs Co-ordination. The vast majority of staff have been trained in using Hertfordshire STEPS: this is a therapeutic approach to positive behaviour management and is the local authority's preferred approach.

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

Your role as parent is central to their education. We therefore value your knowledge and expertise about your child and aim to do this by supporting not only your child but you as a family.

In our 'meet the teacher' meetings at the start of the academic year, we discuss how you can support with reading and homework. If your child receives special educational provision, we will invite you to school every term to discuss the strategies that we use in school; we will seek your advice about what works well at home and will also show you what works at school.

We will discuss your child's needs with you. You will be invited to join in with any programmes to support your child's learning, including how to help your child with their phonics, reading and number work.

9. How will I be involved in discussions about and planning for my child's education?

There will be termly planning meetings for children receiving special educational provision. These involve the parents or carers and the class teachers who will work alongside the SENCO to implement any advice given from external professionals involved with the child. At these meetings, we will review the child's progress over the preceding term and plan provision for the term ahead. Targets are agreed for the subsequent term, in order to work towards the desired outcomes for the child. The voice of the child and the parents is central to these meetings.

For children with EHCPs, parents will be invited to attend their annual review.

Between these meetings, your child's teacher will be available to discuss your child's needs; however, it may be necessary for you to arrange a mutually convenient time for a meeting.

10. How will my child be included in activities outside the classroom including school trips?

All educational visits involve the whole class. If children have special educational needs that may make their participation in a trip more challenging, we conduct individual risk assessments and aim to remove any barriers to participation. We will involve you in this process and may even ask you to accompany your child on a trip. Ratios for school trips are at the discretion of the headteacher but are maintained at the standards set by Hertfordshire County Council.

We have flexible start and end times to the school day, by providing a breakfast club and afterschool club, to widen access as far as possible.

Children in receipt of additional Pupil Premium funding may receive financial help to ensure they can be fully included in all activities.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

We do have a ramp in both the infants and junior playground making the school accessible for wheelchair users. Disabled toilet facilities are available on site.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

The school office is always open throughout the day and office staff can direct enquiries to the most appropriate member of staff.

Class teachers are available at the end of the day, or will gladly see you with an appointment which can be made through the school office. Mrs Wilson, the head teacher, Mrs Smart the Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Gadhvi the Inclusion Coordinator/SENCO and Mrs Gordon our SENCO can all be contacted via the school telephone (01707-656963).

The school works, wherever possible, in partnership with parents to ensure a collaborative approach to meeting pupils' needs. If there are any complaints relating to the provision for pupils with access needs these will be dealt with in the first instance by the SENCO. If the matter is not resolved then then an appointment can be made with the Headteacher. The SEND governor or Chair of Governors may be involved if the complaint is not resolved satisfactorily.

Hertfordshire county councils Local offer can be accessed online at: www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer

A full copy of our SEN policy is available on our school website.

13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school, transfer to a new school or the next stage of education and life?

Children entering the school with SEND will have a tour of the school with their parents or carers and the Headteacher. After that, the point of contact will be the SENCO and class teacher. We share information from the preceding school and will work closely with you to help transition. Our transition plan includes a staggered start, so that your child can have the best possible introduction to school and so that we have a good overview of their needs.

When starting Nursery or in Reception, before starting school the Early Years team will carry out a home-visit to meet your child in their home environment. Stay and play afternoons are also planned so that your child becomes comfortable in their new environment.

Children going from year to year through the school have transition days with their new teachers. The teachers have a transition meeting to discuss the needs of all the children in their class.

Children who are moving on to secondary schools have transition days in their new settings. The SENCO will liaise with the school to discuss the needs of your child (with your parental permission). Individual visits have been arranged with Oakmere and several secondary schools, where child, parents and an Oakmere staff member have been to look around the new setting together.

Please feel free to contact the Headteacher or SENCO if you do have any concerns and we will do our best to help.