

MERTON BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL
Special Educational Needs Information - The Local Offer



At Merton Bank Primary School we strive to support all children to enable them to achieve at school.

In order to do this many steps are taken to support them through their learning journey.

Quality teaching is vital; however for some children there are occasions when further additional support may be needed to help them achieve their targets.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) is:

Mrs Melanie Clark

Roles & Responsibilities of the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

Our SENCOs are responsible for the operation of the Special Educational Needs Policy and co- ordination of specific provision made to support individual children with SEN.

We liaise with staff to monitor the pupil's progress and plan further interventions where progress is slower than expected. We regularly have contact with a wide range of external agencies that are able to give more specialised advice.

If you have any concerns regarding SEN matters, do not hesitate to contact us

Current SEN Updates:

What is Pupil Premium?

The Pupil Premium was introduced in April 2011 and is allocated to schools to work with pupils who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years. Schools also receive funding for children who have been looked after continuously for more than six months, and children of service personnel.

Why has it been introduced?

The Government believes that the Pupil Premium, which is additional to main school funding, is the best way to address the current underlying inequalities between children eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their peers by ensuring that funding to tackle disadvantage reaches the pupils who need it most.

Who decides on how the money is spent?

In most cases the Pupil Premium is paid direct to schools, allocated to them for every pupil who receives free school meals. Schools decide how to use the funding, as they are best placed to assess what their pupils need.

How are schools accountable for the spending of Pupil Premium?

They are held accountable for the decisions they make through:

- the performance tables which show the performance of disadvantaged pupils compared with their peers.
- the new Ofsted inspection framework, under which inspectors focus on the attainment of pupil groups, in particular those who attract the Pupil Premium.
- Children and Families Bill 2013 -The Children and Families Bill took forward the Coalition Government's commitment to improve services for vulnerable children and support strong families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The Bill reformed the systems for adoption, looked after children, family justice and special educational needs. The Government continues to transform the system for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), including those who are disabled, so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them. The Bill extended the SEN system from birth to 25 years, giving children, young people and their parents/carers greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met. It took forward the reform programme set out in Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability: Progress and next steps by:
 - replacing statements and learning difficulty assessments with a new birth- to-25 Education, Health and Care Plan, extending rights and protections to young people in further education and training and offering families personal budgets so that they have more control over the support they need;
 - improving cooperation between all the services that support children and their families and particularly requiring local authorities and health authorities to work together;
 - requiring local authorities to involve children, young people and parents in reviewing and developing provision for those with special educational needs and to publish a 'local offer' of support.

What is the Local Offer?

- The Local Offer was first introduced in the Green Paper (March 2011) as a local offer of all services available to support disabled children and children with SEN and their families. This easy to understand information will set out what is normally available in schools to help children with lower-level SEN as well as the options available to support families who need additional help to care for their child."

What will it do?

The Local Offer will provide parents/carers with information about how to access services in their area, and what they can expect from those services. With regard to Education, it will let parents/ carers and young people know how school and colleges will support them, and what they can expect across the local settings. The Local Offer Steering Group initially developed a series of questions for schools, and trialled them with a small number of settings.

There are 14 questions, devised in consultation with parents/carers and other agencies, which reflect their concerns and interests. These will be answered by agencies, schools and colleges to provide information to parents and carers to enable them to make decisions about how to best support their child's needs.

Below are Merton Bank Primary School's responses to these questions.

1. How does Merton Bank Primary School know if children need extra help?

We know when pupils need help if a).concerns are raised by parents/carers, teachers or the child b). limited progress is being made c). there is a change in the pupil's behaviour or progress

2. What should I do if I think my child may have special educational needs?

The class teacher is the initial point of contact for responding to parental concerns. If you have concerns then contact Mrs Clark who is the SENCo.

3. How will I know how Merton Bank Primary School will support my child?

Each pupil's education programme will be planned by the class teacher. It will be differentiated accordingly to suit the pupil's individual needs. This may include additional general support by the teacher or teaching assistant in class. If a pupil has needs related to more specific areas of their education, such as spelling, handwriting, numeracy & literacy skills etc. then the pupil will be placed in a small focus group. This will be run by the teacher or teaching assistant. The length of time of the intervention will vary according to need but will generally be for a term. The interventions will be regularly reviewed by all involved to ascertain the effectiveness of the provision and to inform future planning.

These interventions will be recorded in the Class Intervention Book (this is a record of the interventions, timings and impact of the intervention). If you have any queries related to the interventions please do not hesitate to contact the class teacher or SENCo. Pupil Progress Meetings are held each term. This is a meeting where the class teacher meets with the Head Teacher /SENco to discuss the progress of the pupils in their class. This shared discussion may highlight any potential problems in order for further support to be planned. Occasionally a pupil may need more expert support from an outside agency such as the Educational Psychologist, Behaviour Support Team, Speech and Language Therapist etc. A referral will be made, with your consent and forwarded to the most appropriate agency. After a series of assessments, consultations and observations, a programme of support is usually provided to the school and parents/carers.

4. How will the curriculum be matched to my child's needs?

When a pupil has been identified with additional needs their work will be differentiated by the class teacher to enable them to access the curriculum more easily. Teaching Assistants (TAs) may be allocated to work with the pupil on a 1-1 or small focus group basis to target more specific needs.

If a child has been identified as having an additional need, the SENco will be alerted by the class teacher via a SENco Referral Form which will include details of the child's Individual Education Plan/Support Plan or Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP). Targets will be set according to their area of need. These will be monitored and reviewed by the class teacher weekly and by the SENCO three times per year. Referral Forms will be discussed with parents at Parents' Consultations and at other times during the year and a copy given to them.

If appropriate, specialist equipment may be given to the pupil e.g. pencil grips, twiddle toys or easy to use scissors.

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

You will be able to discuss your child's progress at Parents' Evenings and SEN Consultation Sessions. Your child's class teacher will also be available at the end of each day if you wish to raise a concern. Appointments can be made to speak in more detail to the class teacher or SENCo by visiting the school office.

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

The class teacher may suggest ways of how you can support your child. Mrs Clark may meet with you to discuss how to support your child with strategies to use if there are difficulties with a child's behaviour/emotional needs. If outside agencies or the Educational Psychologist/Speech and Language Therapist have been involved, suggestions and programmes of study are normally provided that can be used at home.

7. What support will there be for my child's overall well-being?

The school offers a wide variety of pastoral support for pupils who are encountering emotional difficulties. Class Teachers, Learning Assistants, the school Safeguarding Manager, Attendance Officer and SENCO's are readily available for pupils who wish to discuss issues and concerns.

8. Pupils with medical needs

If a pupil has a medical need then a detailed Care Plan is compiled with support from the school nurse in consultation with parents/carers. These are discussed with all staff who are involved with the pupil. Staff receive Epipen, Asthma and Diabetes training on a yearly basis delivered by the school nurse.

Where necessary and in agreement with parents/carers, medicines are administered in school but only where a signed medicine consent form is in place to ensure the safety of both child and staff member. There are trained First Aid staff in school at all times.

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

At times it may be necessary to consult with outside agencies to receive their specialised expertise. The agencies used by the school include:

- Educational Psychologist
- CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Educational Welfare Officer
- Inclusion Team
- Social Services
- Children's Therapy Team (Speech & Language/Occupational Therapy)
- Community Paediatricians
- School Nurse
- LSS (Learning Support Service)

An Educational Psychologist may work directly with pupils whose needs are felt to be quite considerable and have not responded well to the interventions previously put in place for them. This involvement is generally discussed at the School Planning Meeting which takes place at the beginning of each new term and involves the school SENCO's, Inclusion Officer, Educational Psychologist and, where appropriate, other professionals. The aim of each Planning Meeting is to gain an understanding of and try to resolve a pupil's difficulties. In order to help understand the pupil's educational needs better, the Psychologist will generally meet with the parent and give feedback before and after any consultations/observations and assessments have been completed. She will offer advice to the school and parent/carers on how to best support the pupil in order to take their learning forward and support their emotional wellbeing.

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

Different members of staff have received training related to SEND. These have included sessions on:

How to support pupils on the autistic spectrum. How to support pupils with social and emotional needs. How to support pupils with speech and language difficulties. How to support pupils with physical and co-ordination needs.

Mrs Clark completed her studies and gained the 'National Award for Special Educational Needs Co- ordination' (PGCert/SEN) qualification in July 2014.

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

Activities and school trips are available to and accessible by all. Risk assessments are carried out and procedures are put in place to enable all children to participate.

12. How accessible is the school environment?

As a school we are happy to discuss individual access requirements. Facilities we have at present include:

Ramps outside school to make the building accessible to all. A lift and toilets adapted for disabled/wheelchair users. Wide doors in some parts of the building. Internal ramps for ease of movement around school.

Pupils with restricted mobility or visual/auditory impairment have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) detailing the procedures for their swift and supported evacuation of the school building should an emergency require.

13. How will the school prepare and support my child when joining Merton Bank Primary School or transferring to a new school?

Many strategies are in place to enable the pupil's transition to be as smooth as possible. These include:

Discussions between the previous or receiving schools prior to the pupil joining/leaving. All pupils attend a pre visit/transition session where they spend some time with their new class teacher. Additional visits are also arranged for pupils who need extra time in their new school. Mrs Clark is always willing to meet parents/carers prior to their child joining the school.

Secondary school staff visit pupils prior to them joining their new school. Mrs Clark, as well as class teachers, liaise with the SENCOs from the secondary schools to pass on information regarding SEN pupils. Where a pupil may have more specialised needs, a separate meeting may be arranged with Mrs Clark, the secondary school SENCO, the parents/carers and where appropriate, the pupil.

14. How are the school's resources allocated and matched to children's special educational needs?

The SEN budget is allocated each financial year. The money is used to provide additional support or resources dependant on an individual's needs.

The additional provision may be allocated after discussion with the class teacher at pupil progress meetings or if a concern has been raised by them at another time during the year.

15. How is the decision made about how much support my child will receive?

These decisions are made in consultation with the class teacher and Senior Leadership Team. Decisions are based upon termly tracking of pupil progress and as a result of assessments by outside agencies. During their school life, if further concerns are identified due to the pupil's lack of progress or well-being then other interventions will be arranged.

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

All parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's education. This may be through discussions with the class teacher, during parents evenings, during discussions with Mrs Clark or other professionals. Parents are encouraged to comment on their child's SENCo Referral Form.

17. Who can I contact for further information?

If you wish to discuss your child's educational needs, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the SENCo or Head Teacher

I hope I have answered any queries you may have but do not hesitate to contact the school if you have further questions.

Mrs Melanie Clark
September 2020