

# SEN Assessment Guide



All parents and carers want the best for their child. When a child has additional needs, or is finding their learning tricky, parental anxiety can be heightened. We aim to work closely with parents to ensure that all children are well supported and that parents are informed and understand the processes involved. We hope this will alleviate worries.

At Itchen Abbas, we use a graduated approach in line with the SEN Code of Practice (2014) and Hampshire guidance.

- Most children's educational needs will be met by high quality teaching in the classroom.
- Some children may not make as strong progress or attainment as anticipated. They may require a short period of extra help. We call this **Amber Support**.
- Some children will be making little progress and attaining well below their peers. They will need something additional to and different from their peers to help them progress in their learning. This can be for a short period of time or longer. This is called **SEN** support.
- A small number of children (3.7% in 2025 nationally) may need a statutory assessment and additional support to help them make progress. This is where the child may be eligible to receive an EHCP.

This can all be very confusing, so this leaflet aims to provide clarity on how we assess the level at which a child is working and help parents understand what support they should expect.

## All pupils are taught through High Quality Teaching

High quality teaching is the skilled, professional assessing, planning and teaching that is required from all teachers.

Although not a checklist, it will include:

- Highly focused lesson design with sharp objectives based on accurate, in-depth assessment of children's starting points and progress within each objective.
- An understanding of any barriers to learning that may hinder the child and the implementing of personalised strategies to support the child.
- High demands of pupil involvement and engagement with their learning.
- High levels of interaction for all pupils.
- Appropriate use of teacher questioning, modelling and explaining.
- An emphasis on learning through dialogue, with regular opportunities for pupils to talk, both individually and in groups.
- An expectation that pupils will accept responsibility for their own learning and work independently.
- Regular use of encouragement and authentic praise to engage and motivate pupils.

In most cases, high quality teaching will enable children to make good progress and attain in line with age expectations.

## Amber Support Plan

If a child is not making good progress or attaining in line with age expectations, our first response is to place them on an **Amber Support Plan**.

This means that the high-quality teaching may include some additional support to overcome a specific barrier to learning but the child does not meet the criteria for the SEN Register.

The additional support we will offer your child can include:

- The SENCO will hold discussions with the class teacher to provide additional strategies to support the child's learning.
- The SENCO will evaluate the child's learning to identify any barriers to learning and the most significant next steps which will have the greatest impact on learning.
- The child may receive pre-tutoring before a lesson to cue them in to the learning.
- The child may receive post-tutoring to review what they have learnt and clarify any misconceptions.
- Reward charts may be used to help motivate, praise and celebrate success.
- Small group or 1:1 work during lessons.
- The use of personalised scaffolds to support the child in their learning.
- A specific intervention for an identified area of need.

## SEN Support

High quality teaching, differentiated for the individual child, is the first step in responding to children who have or may have SEN. At this stage, the child will also require support which is additional to and different from, their peers.

At Itchen Abbas, we follow Hampshire County Council's guidance and checklist to identify whether the child's needs are a significant barrier to learning and therefore they need to be placed on our SEN register. We will discuss our concerns with parents and listen to the concerns and views of parents in our assessments.

There are four categories of SEN as identified in the SEN Code of Practice.

1. Cognition and learning (Including specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia).
2. Social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
3. Communication and Interaction (which include Speech and Language and Autistic Spectrum Disorder).
4. Physical and sensory.

These children will be placed on our SEN register and an ISP will be written collaboratively by the teacher, child and parents. The ISP will include targets specific to the special educational need, outlining how this need will be met and reviewed regularly. Our aim is that, through additional support, the barriers to learning will be overcome and the child be removed from the register. Following the criteria, it may become necessary for the child to go back on the register at a later date.

Our SEN policy will provide more information on the provision provided. Specific information on each of these areas of need, can be found on the next page of this booklet.

## Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

An EHCP is for those children who, despite intervention and SEN support, their difficulties are still causing significant barriers to learning. Where either the SENCO, class teacher and / or parents have serious concerns regarding their child's attainment and progress and feel a statutory assessment for EHCP could be the next step, a meeting will be set up with parents, SENCO and class teacher to review the child's difficulties.

The child's needs will be assessed against the Hampshire's Criteria for Statutory Assessment. This will clarify whether the level and range of needs are considered appropriate for an EHCP and where admission to specialist provision may be regarded as a possible placement.

The criteria build on the general criteria for assessment provided in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEN) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years, issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in 2014. Decisions regarding statutory assessment and admission to specialist provision will be made as part of a continuing assessment and review process of individual children's needs, as recommended in the Code of Practice.

## Involving Specialists

Where a pupil continues to make less than expected progress, despite SEN support and interventions, the school may involve specialists, including from outside agencies.

The school will involve a specialist where a pupil continues to make little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially (2 years) below those expected of pupils of a similar age, despite SEN support.

The school may involve specialists at any point to advise us on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. Parents will always be involved in any decision to involve specialists.

Specialist could include:

- Educational Psychologists
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Specialist teachers or support services,
- Therapists (including Speech and Language therapists, Occupational therapists and Physiotherapists)



## Monitoring and assessing of SEN

High quality teaching, support for SEN and the implementation of EHC plans, are monitored and assessed by the SENCO and the Head Teacher. School Governors, including the designated Governor for SEN, have the responsibility to challenge School Leaders and ensure that all children are making the most progress possible.

Our SENCO is Mrs. Sarah Parsons.

Our SEND Governor is Mrs. Sharon Priest.

## Areas of Need for SEN

### Cognition and learning and or Specific Learning Difficulties

Hampshire criteria states that children with this difficulty:



- will achieve a standardised score of less than 78 (we look at below 85 so no-one is missed).
- may have difficulty in attaining in aspects of learning despite appropriate intervention.
- will have a rate of progress which is slow and will be working substantially below that expected for children of a similar age (2 years below age expectations).
- may have specific learning difficulties (SpLD) and/or motor skills delay.
- may have difficulty in understanding concepts, and may exhibit memory and processing difficulties.
- may lack motivation to learn and have a limited concentration span.
- may also be socially and emotionally immature and have limited interpersonal skills, including low self-esteem.

Specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) affect the way information is learned and processed. They can have a significant impact on education and learning and on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. SpLD is an umbrella term to cover a range of frequently co-occurring difficulties, more commonly:

- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Dyscalculi
- Auditory Processing Disorder

### Social, emotional and mental health difficulties

Hampshire criteria states that children with this difficulty:



- have social, emotional or mental health difficulties, these may substantially affect their behaviour and regularly create barriers to their own learning or that of others.
- may experience a range of difficulties in acquiring the social and emotional skills that are necessary to succeed.
- may persistently experience these difficulties despite differentiated learning opportunities and the strategies usually employed to promote positive behaviour.
- may have behaviours which manifest over time, these may include: distractibility, failure to make anticipated progress, poor relationships, frustration, non-co-operation, lack of emotional literacy, withdrawal and non-attendance for a variety of reasons.

### Communication and Interaction

Hampshire criteria states that children with this difficulty:



- may have language and communication difficulties which create a barrier to learning and/or impedes the development of social skills and relationship
- may have areas of speech, social communication, language, fluency skills which are not age appropriate and/or consistent with peers.
- may have disordered/delayed receptive and/or expressive language.
- may also have disordered or delayed speech, so that social interactions are limited and this may result in frustration, stress and/or challenging behaviour.
- may have difficulty in understanding and/or expressing emotions, abstract and non-literal language, inference, social interactions all of which could result in ritualistic and/or rigid behaviours.
- may have any of the above result in challenging behaviours, school refusal, difficulty in forming relationships, frustration or anxiety.

Hampshire criteria states that children with Autism will:

- will have difficulties with communication, social interaction and flexible thinking which cause barriers to learning and the development of positive social relationships despite the provision of differentiated learning opportunities.
- may have difficulties which includes: inappropriate obsessive rigid and/or ritualistic behaviours; receptive and expressive language difficulties; hyper/hypo sensitivity to sensory input; and significant anxiety and self-esteem issues.
- may have difficulty in recognising and/or understanding emotions.

### Physical and sensory

Hampshire criteria states that children with this difficulty:



- have an identified physical disability that causes barriers to learning. This may also affect the development of emotional well-being and self-esteem.
- will need additional support (often with an adult) to overcome barriers to learning, personal care and transfers between specialist equipment.
- may require: specialist equipment relating to their disability and advice from the Specialist Teacher Advisory Service; and adult support to access the curriculum, manage their condition and personal care, and move safely within the environment.

## Glossary of terms:

- SEN – Special Educational Needs
- ISP – Individual Support Plan
- SEN support – Personalised support for children with Special Educational and Disability needs
- EHCP – Education and Health Care Plan
- Barriers to learning – What specific need is preventing the child from progress
- Next steps – targets set by teachers for the children to achieve
- Scaffolds – resources to help children in lessons (similar to using arm bands when learning to swim), will be gradually removed as the child progresses
- ASD – Autistic Spectrum Disorder
- SpLD – Specific Learning Difficulty (such as Dyslexia)
- SENCO – The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

If a child can't  
learn the way we  
teach, maybe we  
should teach the  
way they learn.

Ignacio Estrada