

What else can I do to help my child?

You are the person who knows your child best and has the most influence on their development. You could try to:

- Share books with each other
- Talk and listen to each other
- Involve them in family activities and encourage them to take on responsibility for doing certain jobs around the house
- Play games to help develop good social relationships and self confidence.

Remember to be realistic with your expectations on your child. It is very important that you encourage and praise your child for what they achieve.

You can also help your child by working as a partner in their education. For example you should try to:

- Keep in regular contact with the school and discuss how you can support your child's learning
- Always contact the school if you have any concerns or questions about your child's education
- Ask for an explanation if you are unsure about what people are saying
- Attend parents evenings, concerts, class reading sessions etc. whenever possible— let your child know that you are interested in what they are doing at school
- Share all the relevant information with your child's school and other professionals involved, after all, you know your child better than anyone

Our school SENCo is Miss Louise Mayes, who works at Pen Mill Academy all day Monday to Thursday.

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Whatever the age of your child you can also contact the Somerset Partnership for impartial advice on 01823 355 578 or at [enquireies@somersetparentpartnership.org.uk](mailto:enquireies@somersetparentpartnership.org.uk) or you could visit their website <http://www.somersetparentpartnership.org.uk/spp/>.



## A Parent Carer Guide to SEN at Pen Mill Academy

At Pen Mill Academy we believe that every child should be encouraged to reach his or her full potential both academically and socially. We recognise the importance of working in close partnership with parents and the community, to ensure that our children are both happy and successful.

Children learn at different speeds and in a variety of ways. There is likely to be a wide range of ability within your child's class at school. Children have special educational needs if they have:

**'...learning difficulty or disability which call for special education provision to be made for them....'**

This definition is only a part of the full legal description of special educational needs.

What is learning difficulty?

Children who have a learning difficulty may find it harder to learn than the majority of children of the same age, or they may have a disability which prevents or hinders them from taking full advantage of the education provided for other children.

Children do not have learning difficulties simply because their first language is not English. However some of these children may also have learning difficulties.

What might my child's learning difficulty cause problems with?

- Reading, writing or number work
- Expressing themselves or understanding information
- Making friends or relating to adults
- Social and emotional development or mental health
- Personal organisation
- Tasks or activities which depend on sensory or physical skills

The SEN Code of Practice (Revised 2014) is the guidance that schools must follow. It states that there are four main areas of special needs. These are:

- Cognition and learning
- Emotional and social development and mental health and wellbeing
- Communication and interaction
- Sensory and physical needs

How do we identify special education needs?

- When children have identified SEN before they start here, we work with the people who already know them and use the information already available to identify what their SEN will be in our school setting and how we can manage it.
- If you tell us you think your child has a SEN we will discuss this with you and look into it. We will share what we discover with you and agree with you what we will do next and what you can do to help your child.
- If our staff think that your child has a SEN this may be because they are not making the same progress as other children, for example they may not be able to follow instructions or answer questions. We will observe them, assess their understanding of what we are doing in school and may use test to find out what is causing the difficulty. Should we require further help we will contact the SEN support Services Team from the Local Authority, with your permission. We will always discuss what we have noticed with you and keep you informed of our teacher assessments.

How do we involve children and their parent carers in identifying Special Educational Needs and planning to meet them?

- We are a child and family centred school, so you will be involved in all decision making about your child's support.
- When we assess SEN we discuss it with you to determine whether your child's understanding and behaviour are the same at school and at home, we take this into account and work with you so that we are all helping your child in the same way to make progress. We write and review SEND Support Plans with appropriate goals termly with children and parent carers for children who are identified with SEN.
- Sometimes we use homework to repeat and practise activities that are new and present to achievable challenge for the individual pupil.

Where can children ask for help or extra support?

- Pen Mill Academy aims to ensure that there is a culture where children can feel confident to ask for help from any member of staff.
- Most children feel that they can ask their teacher or teaching assistant and/or Miss Louise Mayes our Special Needs Co-ordinator. Miss Mayes will follow up any concerns and make sure children's views are heard.

Where can parent carers ask for extra help or support?

- Your views are important to us and we want to listen to them and know that you are satisfied with what happens in school to support your child.
- In school, Miss Louise Mayes is our Special Needs Co-ordinator. Miss Mayes will follow up your concerns and make sure your views are heard.
- There are a number of parent support groups, please do not hesitate to come into school to be given details of these.
- Somerset's Parent Carer forum <http://www.somersetpcf.org.uk/> is an umbrella organisation for all parents and carers of children & young people with Special Educational Needs, disabilities and complex medical needs. They work with Somerset Local Authority, education, health and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver, meet the needs of disabled children and their families.

What to do if you are not satisfied with a decision or what is happening?

- Your first point of contact is always the person responsible—this may be the class teacher, the SENCo or the Headteacher. Explain your concerns to them first. If you are not satisfied that your concern has been addressed, speak to the Headteacher then ask for the school Governor representative.
- If you do not feel the issues have been resolved, we will arrange a meeting with the Chair of Governors who can be contacted via the school.

#### How do we adapt the curriculum so that we meet SEN?

- All our staff are trained to make lessons easier or more challenging so that every child is able to learn at their own pace and in their own way. We will make or provide any additional resources required.
- We use additional materials/interventions so that we have something at the right level for the children with SEN. We use, the Somerset Individualised Literacy Intervention, Baseline Communication, Talking Partners, Emotional literacy, Talk About and other personally tailored interventions.

#### How do we modify teaching approaches?

- All our staff are trained so that we are able to adapt to a range of SEN—specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, autistic spectrum disorder, speech, language and communication needs and emotional and social difficulties.
- When teaching, we use different approaches to learning. These are visual, aural and kinaesthetic methods.
- All staff have received training in identifying and meeting the needs of learners with dyslexia. Teachers are trained according to the needs of the children in their care. Additional training includes delivering speech and language programmes, co-ordination groups, teaching children with a hearing loss and medical conditions—epilepsy.

#### How do we support children in their transition into our school and when they leave us?

- Children entering Pen Mill Academy and their parent carers will have opportunities to visit the school in the summer term prior to them starting in the September. Information will be gathered regarding any SEN and any necessary support put in place on their entry into school. Additional visits to school are encouraged for those children who may find the transition difficult between home and school.
- Meetings will be arranged for those children who are already known to the Early Years SEN Services to make school aware of their needs to ensure the correct support is in place.
- When children leave Pen Mill Academy to go to Junior School meetings are arranged between the schools to share information. SENCos from each school will meet to discuss those children with SEN; what their difficulties are and how the next school will continue to support them. Staff from the Junior school often attend SEN Review meetings in the summer term of year 2 so that parent carers and staff can work together to plan for the future.
- In-year transition is supported with extra visits to the new class. For some children, booklets are made with pictures of new staff and the classroom in order to prepare the child for the new academic year and the changes they will face.

#### How does the SEN funding work?

- Schools receive funding for all children including those with Special Educational Needs and these needs are met from this, (including equipment). The Local Authority may contribute more funding if the cost of meeting an individual child's need is more than £6000 per year.
- If the assessment of a child's need identifies something that is significantly different to what is usually available, there will be additional funding allocated. Parents may have a say in how this is used. You will be informed if this means you are eligible for a personal budget. This must be used to fund the agreed plan.

How do we assess pupil progress towards the outcomes we have targeted for children with SEN? How do we review this progress so that the child stays on track to make at least good progress?

- We use the P Levels or 'Progress Scales' to assess progress in smaller steps and at a slower pace than the usual national curriculum if required.
- We use termly staff meetings to check that progress is good in Reading, Writing and Numeracy.
- We check how well a child understands and makes progress in each lesson through ongoing assessments and evaluations.
- Our Senior Leadership Team monitors the progress of all children every half term at tracking meetings and reviews. We discuss what we are doing to make sure they make good progress including those with SEN.
- For all children with SEN, the SENCo plans targets for progress with parents and staff termly as part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle. For children with more complex SEN, progress is reviewed every year at the SEN Annual Review. Children with less complex SEN will have their progress discussed at the usual termly point and yearly with the SENCo at an SEN Review. Children with an EHC Plan will have reviews each term as well as the Annual Review, which is reported to the Local Authority.

What equipment or resources do we use to give extra support?

- We use a variety of resources; theraputty, writing slopes, ICT programs, Ipads, word banks, displays, numicon, etc.
- We deliver speech & language programmes provided by the Speech Therapy Service. A therapist or the SENCo will demonstrate to school staff how to use the programme and this will then be taught and assessed after a given period of time.
- Any specific physical requirements will be assessed individually and equipment will be provided to meet those needs with the help of Local Authority SEN services.

What extra support do we bring in to help us meet SEN: specialist services, external expertise and how do we work together collaboratively?

- We have support teachers/support staff for accessing the curriculum and extra work on SEN related needs (speech, language and communication, hearing impairment, visual impairment, behaviour related needs and severe learning difficulties, ie autism)
- We get support from other Local Authority services, SEN Specialists, Education Psychologists, Speech Therapy and CAMHS as well as working collaboratively with other Yeovil schools.
- We get support from Occupational Therapy (OT) for children who need assessment for movement difficulties or other specific needs.
- We review all targets set at Assess Plan Do Review meetings together with the child, parent and any other services involved. We agree what everyone will do to make teaching more effective to support the learning. New targets will be discussed and a date set to review how well the child is doing, if the targets are making a difference and what we need to do next. This information is recorded to ensure accountability.

What extra-curricular activities are there available for children with SEN?

We have a number of after school activities, which are open to all children. Should any child need support to access these activities, school will make the necessary arrangements.

- We have a breakfast club in school which is available to all children.
- We have regular educational visits as well as people coming into school to support different topic areas. We aim to choose visits that are accessible to all.