



SEN Information Report

March 2020

In 2015 a new Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities became law in England. It covers all schools and settings that cater for children from 0 to 25.

A key part of this Code of Practice is to make it easier for parents and carers to have information about the SEND provision on offer in schools. Every school has been asked to write and publish information that explains how we identify and meet the needs of children with special educational needs or with disabilities

The SEN Code of Practice (January 2015) defines Special educational needs (SEN) as the following:

“A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- *has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- *has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions*

Many children and young people who have SEN may have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is

‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’.

This definition provides a relatively low threshold and includes more children than many realise: ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’.

This definition includes sensory impairments such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, and cancer. Children and young people with such conditions do not necessarily have SEN, but there is a significant overlap between disabled children and young people and those with SEN. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision they will also be covered by the SEN definition.”

Merry Hill is a mainstream, inclusive community two form entry Infant School with a 60 place Nursery class (30 morning places and 30 afternoon places). We currently 7.2% of pupils on our Inclusion Register.

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

We recognise that children can have special educational needs either throughout, or at any time, during their school career. Therefore we constantly monitor pupil progress across the curriculum and particularly in Reading, Writing, Maths and Speaking and Listening. The senior leadership team (SLT) and the class teacher

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meet every first half term to carry out a 'Health Check' when the progress of all vulnerable children is reviewed. Any children who are failing to make expected progress are also flagged up and appropriate interventions put in place. This group of staff meet again at the end of the term for Pupil Progress Meetings where attainment and progress is again reviewed. Where a child is found to be making less than expected progress or is attaining **significantly** below age-related expectations, discussions will then take place between the class teacher, SENCo and parents as to the particular needs of the child and strategies both school and home can be put in place to support them.

We also carefully observe children's social, emotional and mental health. Any concerns or significant change in any of these areas will be discussed with the class teacher, SENCo and the parents.

Any member of staff can raise concerns about a child. Moreover, parents are encouraged to discuss concerns that they may have about their child with the school. Staff/parents/carers then work in partnership with the class teacher and the SENCo to ensure every child receives the support they need to overcome any barriers and fulfil their potential at school.

2. How will school support my child?

At Merry Hill we ensure all teachers deliver Quality First teaching, which is inclusive of the needs of all pupils. We do, of course, recognise that some children need additional support. Our aim, as far as possible, is to support student learning in the class room. However, at times small group or 1:1 interventions will be needed.

Class teachers plan lessons which are differentiated to meet the needs of all children in their class. They will organise the class into small groups in order to focus the teaching and learning potential. Groups may be supported by a key adult, either the class teacher or learning support assistant (LSA), where appropriate, to foster effective, independent learning. Class teachers may liaise with the SENCo for additional advice or support. SEND provision, including interventions, is recorded. Progress is monitored closely to measure the impact of interventions. If school and parents agree that further advice is needed, a referral will be made to a specific outside agency such as the Educational Psychologist, Speech Therapist or Specific Learning Difficulties Advisory Teacher. The SEND link Governor works closely with the school to help monitor provision. The SENCo and SEND Governor meet regularly to facilitate this process.

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

We believe in working closely with parents/carers in sharing ideas and information to encourage children to aspire to achieve their best in their learning and their self - esteem.

If a child needs a more bespoke programme of support, targets may be recorded. These targets may be related to an area of the academic curriculum or to develop social or emotional skills. Their progress will be shared regularly with parents/carers and the child. Termly SEN target review meetings will be held with parents, the class teacher, SENCo and wherever possible outside agencies that may be involved to review previous targets and work together to set new ones.

In addition to these target setting meetings and formal parent/carer consultation evenings (Autumn & Spring Terms), information can be shared via email, telephone, and home/school liaison book or face to face meeting at any time (an appointment may be necessary).

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All parents/carers will receive an end of year written report detailing their child's progress across the curriculum.

If your child is identified at any time throughout the year as not making progress, the school will set up a meeting to discuss this with you in more detail. This may involve: listening to any concerns you may have, planning any additional support your child may need, discussing with you any referrals to outside professionals to support your child.

Parents of students with an Education Health and Care Plan are invited to contribute to and attend the annual review meeting.

Parents may also make an after school appointment with the class teachers at any point during the year to discuss any concerns they may have. In addition, the SENCo operates an "Open Door" policy that allows parents to drop in at any time and speak to the SENCo if she is available.

4. How will the school's approach to teaching and learning be matched to my child's needs ?

For a child who has been assessed as in need of SEND support, we follow a cycle of 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review.'

On a daily basis, teachers assess the learning of all pupils, and adjust their subsequent teaching accordingly. Children's needs are met by careful differentiation; for example, adjusting the teaching and learning styles, the structure of the lesson, the resources provided, the layout of the classroom, the pitch of activities, support from adults, pre-teaching of vocabulary and concepts. IT and visual support are regularly used.

There will be half termly pupil progress meetings, with the Head, Assistant Headteacher(s), SENCo and class teacher to see how a child is doing and make sure that the provision is making the intended impact on the child.

Termly meetings will be held with teachers, parents and the child (where appropriate) to 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 agreed desired outcomes for the child. The voice of the child and the parents are central to these meetings. Where appropriate, advice from external professionals will be sought and used to implement specific strategies or to access particular resources or equipment.

The Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher(s) and SENCo discuss all the information they have about SEND in the school, including the children getting extra support already, the children needing extra support and the children who have been identified as not making as much progress as would be expected. From this information, they decide what resources/training and support is needed. The link SEND Governor is kept up to date with all decisions made.

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

The well-being of all pupils is of primary concern at Merry Hill Infant School. We work very hard to develop children as well-rounded, happy, confident young people. We have many opportunities to celebrate children's achievements, including weekly Celebration Assemblies, and weekly Golden Time sessions. We take every opportunity to expose children to a broad range of life experiences, from sports events, activities in the school and school trips. We ensure that children feel safe by having clear routines, consistent expectations and regular adults in every class. Pupil voice is essential to all decision-making. We teach children to respect each

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other and their environment and to behave appropriately at all times. Pupils also contribute to this through the pupil councils; School Council, Eco Warriors and Digital Leaders.

Merry Hill has achieved the Well-being Award for Schools which means that we prioritise emotional well-being and mental health for all our pupils and staff.

We strive to build positive relationships whereby parents, pupils and teachers can share ideas and information together to make school a safe and happy place for everyone. Children are supported with their social and emotional development throughout the school day through the curriculum and by following Merry Hill's Learning Charter. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) covers social, moral, cultural, and emotional aspects of learning and is an integral part of our curriculum. The new Jigsaw PSHE scheme promotes well-being and mindfulness at its core.

Our new Behaviour Policy (September 2018), which includes guidance on expectations and focuses on positive reinforcement, is followed by all staff (the Behaviour Policy is available to view on the school website).

We regularly monitor attendance and take appropriate steps to encourage punctuality and prevent unauthorised absence.

The school ensures the safety of all children through a range of measures. These include:

- Strict disclosure checks for all staff and volunteers
- The school has 3 members of staff (Mrs Regnier, Miss Bateman and Mrs Hall) trained as Designated Safeguarding Leads and a designated Safeguarding Governor
- All staff have regular Safeguarding training, in accordance with government legislation
- A clear whistle blowing policy

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

The staff in our school (Teachers and Learning Support Assistants) are continually receiving new and updated training to meet the needs of all our children and those with SEND. These include:

- Makaton sign language training for children with speech and language difficulties.
- Wellcomms training to assess and support speech and language needs
- Visually impaired training
- Hearing impaired training
- Autism training Tier 1 & Tier 2
- Speech and language training from our link therapist
- Protective Behaviours
- The SENCo is beginning the SENCo Award Autumn 2020
- The SENCo has completed Autism Training Tier 1
- The SENCo attends termly cluster meetings

We have a highly skilled Assistant SENCo (Mrs Taylor) who is qualified in Makaton, Pecs, Drawing and Talking, ELKLAN Speech and Language training Level 4 and Protective Behaviours Training. Teaching staff refer to the SENCo or Assistant SENCo initially and support is offered internally.

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

In the first instance, class teachers differentiate learning in every lesson. This means that they plan particular questions and tasks for groups or individuals so that they are able to access the work at the level that is most appropriate for them.

When a child is on the SEND register (assessed as having longer term special education needs), the school may involve outside agencies such as:

- Speech and Language Service
- Communication Autism Team
- Educational Psychologist
- Behaviour Support – Chessbrook Educational Support Centre
- Moderate Learning Difficulties – Colnbrook School
- Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia) – SpLD
- Physical and Neurological Impairment Team
- School Nurse
- Family Support Worker

Services such as Occupational Therapy and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) can be accessed via the school nurse or GP.

If a child is assessed as having longer term special educational needs they will be entered onto the Inclusion register and will receive additional support. This support will be detailed termly on the pupil passports that are created with the child and the termly Assess, Plan Do, Review sheets that will be created through progress monitoring meetings with the parents, class teacher and SENCo team.

Team Around the Family (TAF) Meetings may be organised where involvement from a number of agencies is required.

8. How will the school help me support my child's learning?

At Merry Hill, we value communication and the sharing of ideas and information between home and school. There are regular opportunities to discuss your child's progress and how you can best support them at home. Termly SEN target setting meetings take place prior to formal parent/carers' consultation meetings in Autumn and Spring, with a final Open Evening in the Summer Term to view your child's current progress and achievements.

We have 'New to Year' meetings at the start of each term to inform parents of the range of work that their children will be covering in the terms ahead. Parents are also encouraged to support their children with home learning activities and some literacy and maths homework is now available online.

Our SENCo can also support you with ideas and strategies or help you get in touch with external agencies. In addition to the formal meetings, you will be invited to a variety of parental workshops to enable a fuller understanding of how the particular area of the curriculum is explored and developed in school and how your child can be further supported at home. Relevant local courses on offer are signposted through fortnightly Merry Hill Matters Newsletters.

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

In addition to formal parent/carer consultation meetings, you can also discuss your child's education with their class teacher, SENCO, Assist Headteacher(s) or Headteacher. If you need an appointment, this can be made through the school office.

For some pupils, a school/home liaison book may be used to enable regular information-sharing and updates between key school staff and parents/carers.

Where a child needs more focused, individualised differentiation, a Target Sheet or similar may be introduced to enable closer monitoring of small steps of progress. Ideas and information will be shared, reviewed and recorded through this planning each term. Advice from outside professionals will be included and followed in the plan where there is involvement.

If your child's needs are significant, it may be appropriate to undertake a statutory assessment of his/her needs. During this process you will also be supported by the Hertfordshire SEND Team. They will ensure that you fully understand the process. The assessment may lead to the issue of an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP).

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

Merry Hill is an inclusive school. We provide all pupils with equal opportunities to access the curriculum and life of the school. At Merry Hill, children have a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enjoy. Some clubs are run by school staff, some by external professionals, all with appropriate qualifications and DBS clearance. All children are encouraged to take advantage of these activities. Every effort will be made to reduce barriers to participation. We are committed to including students with SEND in activities outside of the classroom, including school trips, and will make reasonable adjustments try to facilitate this. Risk assessments will be undertaken and reasonable adjustments considered to aid inclusion regardless of need or disability.

In some instances parents/carers may be asked to accompany their child on school trips.

11. How accessible is the school environment?

Merry Hill is subject to the general "Equality Duty" under the Equality Act 2010. We are committed to adapting our learning environment and teaching strategies as appropriate within budget constraints.

We always recommend that parents make an appointment to visit our site to make their own assessment of suitability and discuss any specific requirements. We will also liaise with external professionals involved with your child to gain further advice on how we can make the learning environment accessible to all children.

12. Who can I contact for further information?

Name and contact details of key people:

Mrs Caroline Loison is our governor with responsibility for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Mrs Melissa Regnier is the Headteacher.

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Mrs Fay Summers is the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) and works on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons.

Mrs Taylor is Assistant SENCo and works Monday to Thursday.

Miss Lacey Bateman and Mrs Gemma Hall are the Assistant Headteachers.

All of the above are contactable through the school:

Email: admin@merryhill.herts.sch.uk

Phone: 0208 950 2166

Complaints about provision for vulnerable children, those with SEN or who are disabled will normally be directed in the first instance to the class teacher, who should then refer them to the SENCo and Headteacher. If the complaint cannot be resolved through these channels there is a County Complaints procedure for SEND.

13. How will the school prepare and support my child to join the school and transfer to a new school?

The school holds “Welcome” parent sessions at the start of each year to ensure parents have all the relevant information to support their children. If your child is starting in Nursery or Reception there will be a staggered start so your child has time to get use to their new setting. Class teachers in Key Stage 1 also ensure a transition period takes place at the start of the Autumn term to help prepare the children for the expectations of their new year group.

Towards the end of Year 2, Merry Hill prepares all children for the move to Ashfield Junior School. The SENCos at Merry Hill and Ashfield work extremely closely, and all relevant information will be passed to Ashfield during transition meetings in the Summer term. There will be also be additional transition visits during the Summer term for any children who the schools feel may find the move particularly unsettling. If your child is not moving to Ashfield, the SENCo will liaise with your child’s new school to ensure a smooth transition takes place.

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

The school receives a budget for SEND provision. This funding is used for the employment of support staff to assist children with SEND and to provide additional resources such as books, interventions, and any specialist equipment suggested by outside professionals, that may be required to aid their learning beyond the resources commonly used by most other children. The school provides support for all pupils with SEND as the need arises. The school is able to apply for an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP) in consultation with the pupil’s parents and High Needs Funding may be applied for in the interim.

How are decisions made about the range of support my child will receive?

The school may suggest that your child needs some individual support in school. The SENCo and SENCo Assistant will help to identify the needs of each child and work with the class teacher to determine the level of support needed. We will tell you how the support will be used and what strategies will be put in place. For children receiving SEN support, advice from external agencies may sometimes identify that an additional level of support is needed. This will be reviewed constantly and parents/carers will be part of the discussions. Your child might be identified as needing a particularly high level of support, with input needed from professional agencies outside the school. Following discussions with parents/carers and drawing on all available

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information, it may be decided to request an assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC plan). The Local Authority will make a decision whether your child's needs are complex enough to need an EHC plan. If your child is assessed as needing an EHC plan, the Local Authority will ask for further detailed reports on your child's needs from all the professionals involved before writing the EHC plan. The EHC plan will outline the support and strategies to be put in place as well as long and short term goals for your child.

16. How can I find out about the local authority's local offer of services and provisions for children with SEND?

Parents can read about Hertfordshire's local offer at:

www.hertsdirect.org/localoffer

Parents can also find Merry Hill Infant and Nursery School's Supporting School Statement on our school website.

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