



# A Parents Guide to Special Educational Needs



**The term Special Educational Needs** in relation to statutory guidance, means that for all children and young people with a special educational need and or disabilities, are protected by The Children and Families Act (“CAFA”) 2014, as it is a statute law, which means that it is legally binding so that all Local Authorities and schools must comply with it or else they are acting unlawfully.

The statutory guidance is a supporting document for all professionals and families to work with to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved in all areas.

**The SEND Code of Practice 0-25** describes the principles that should be observed by all professionals working with children and young people who have SEN or disabilities.

Chapter 5 of the code of practice shows reference to 0-5 years in Early years as follows;

The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is the statutory framework for children aged 0 to 5 years. All early years providers must follow the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the EYFS and the learning and development requirements, unless an exemption from these has been granted parents and other agencies.

## Local offer - Early years and childcare (0-5)

All local authorities working with their partners must publish information about how children and young people 0 - 25 who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported in their area.

This is known as the Local Offer. - In Cambridgeshire we call it the “SEND Information Hub”

The local offer provides information for children and young people with special educational needs (SEND) and their parents or carers in one single place.

It shows families what they can expect from a range of **local** agencies including education, health and social care and many more.

To access the Send Information Hub online please use the following link:

<https://send.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/kb5/cambridgeshire/directory/home.page>

Or to access the SEND Information Hub without a computer please see below:

- The Send Information Hub (Local Offer) is available from a smart (mobile) phone
- Libraries across the county will help search for information online.
- Support services such as SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) will help you navigate the SEND Information Hub
- Community groups and organisations such as Pinpoint are available to assist and help you

## SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) offers impartial and confidential information, advice and support to parents and carers who have a child or young person with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability or have concerns that their child has special educational needs. They also offer impartial and confidential information, advice and support to young people and children with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability or who have concerns they may have special educational needs.

SENDIASS can help you with

- Confidential support and someone to talk to in confidence
- Advice and information about special educational needs
- Independent Support for children, young people and families as Statemen  
EHC Plans
- Preparing for meetings with your child's school or with professionals who are working with your child
- Information on your rights and responsibilities as a parent, children's rights and SEN law and guidance
- Information about local support groups and voluntary organisations



## Additional Support groups for all Parents in Cambridgeshire's

**Spectrum** is a multi-award winning, parent-led children's charity. They provide events, sessions, and support for families of children with Autism, additional needs, learning difficulties, and disabilities. As an organisation, they are family-focused, advocates of collaboration, passionate about increasing inclusion and reducing isolation whilst supporting Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND).

Their team are all parents of children with Autism, additional needs and disabilities, or work with SEND every day. They understand the journey, hurdles and frustrations that many families face. As a registered Spectrum member, you can also access their dedicated child and family support from the comfort of your home, as well as gain assistance with EHCP and DLA.

To contact Spectrum please click the link : <https://spectrum.org.uk/>

**Pinpoint Cambridgeshire** is not only run for parents – but also by parents.

They give help and information to you as parent/ carers of children and young people aged 0-25 with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and/or additional needs, as well as give parent carers opportunities to have your say and get involved in improving local services.

**No formal diagnosis is required in order to access support from Pinpoint – for example, a child may be on a waiting list, accessing services, had a referral turned down, or just be struggling.**

To contact Pinpoint Cambridgeshire please click the link: <https://pinpoint-cambs.org.uk/information-hub/>

As a setting we take regard of this requirement by implementing the following;

- Our Policy is designed for parents and other professionals, it provides a simple statement outlining our commitment's to a child with Special Educational Needs and the support we provide for them and their families.
- Each child in our setting will be assigned a Key worker
- Each Key worker will carry out daily observations and activities with the children, they build up a diary of the child's progress of which are recorded in a their own Learning Journal, these are then shared with parents at the end of each term, but are also readily available at anytime for parents to view.
- The key worker carries out an initial progress report, this is called a Baseline Tracker– The purpose of tracking children's development in the Early years is to provide a picture of the child's progress and to identify any areas for further support.
- If any areas of support are flagged, then the key worker works alongside the SENCO, to ensure that all provisions available to that child are in place.

We use a graduated response system for identifying children with specific needs - Assess Plan, do & Review process. In simple terms this means that any child not quite achieving their age bands targets, will start this progress,

the key worker will discuss this with the settings Senco, and a targeted observation will be carried out, this is where the key worker will observe the child for 10 mins and record everything they do and say, from this information Targets are set over a 6 week period, after which the Senco and key worker meet with the parent/carer to discuss progress and either set a further target or continue with the original target for a further 6 weeks – this is continued twice times after which if progress is made then no further action is require, however if the child has more complex needs, then we liaise with other professionals and where necessary start the process for additional support.

*For Example during – 2018-2023, we helped:*

- Six children who were needing some extra support with their development, by using the Graduated Approach we were able to apply for and be awarded Special Educational Need Inclusion funding (SENIF) which enabled us to appoint a 1-1 key person to work directly with the child and family to support their developmental learning within our setting. We also applied for and were awarded 4 x Educational Health and Care Plans, we were able to ensure that both child and family were fully supported with all aspects of the transition to primary school.*

- We carry out a 2 Year Check - Every child aged 2-3 years will have a progress check carried out by their key worker. A short written summary report is also completed and shared with the parent/carer, the report will highlight any area of support required, identify strengths and good practice, Parent/Carers are also given the opportunity to comment on their child's progress and any concerns they may have.
- The areas covered are, Communication & Language, Physical Development, Personnel, social and emotional development.
- Our setting is easily accessible with a wide, ramped entrance and disabled toilet facilities. The layout of the classroom is very open and flexible and can be changed to suit our needs.
- We regularly audit the classroom ensuring that all children's needs are met, we have recently created a quiet learning area along with a sensory area , this comprises of a desk and two chairs and a sensory den, we add a selection of different resources to the areas as required.
- We encourage an inclusive practice, all our resources and activities are available to all children , we provide an optimal learning environment for all the children, regardless of their social, cultural or ethnic background, or their disabilities. We have fortnightly music and movement and weejly forest school, where all children in our setting are included and gain so much enjoyment from taking part.



## Four Areas of need:

The SEN code of practice has four broad areas of need:

- Communication and Interaction
- Cognition and learning
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
- Sensory and/or Physical needs



There are many possible warning signs and many helpful strategies and next steps, on the following pages are a few examples of possible warning signs.

## Speech language & Communication :

- Has little interest in communication
- Limited pretend play
- Stammer
- Difficulty maintaining attention
- Has difficulty understanding simple instructions



## Social Emotional and Mental Health:

- The main concerns here would reflect from what a child has experienced , most children with SEN need more time to develop and learn expected behaviour rules.
- Cause for concern would be where persistent behaviour levels were impacting on the child's wellbeing or others around them.

## **Cognition and Learning**

- Delayed in developmental milestones, Standing , sitting talking
- Delayed play skills
- Development is of a lower age band
- Troubled nursing as a baby – ie suckling
- Needs more than another's to develop new skills

## **Sensory & Physical :**

- Delayed rolling, sitting , walking
- Poor head control
- Clumsiness which is not in line with current age
- Limited use of one side
- Delayed language
- Not responding to sudden noises
- No eye contact or limited
- Reacts to bright lights
- Appears uninterested in looking at toys

**If you have any concerns about your child or feel you would just like a chat about your child's progress, please speak to your child's key worker or our trained SENCO.**

Parents Comment:

“ Words cannot express how incredibly grateful we are for all the time you have spent nurturing our Son and helping him along his journey. The time and effort spent helping him to achieve milestones and of course the never ending EHCP with the countless forms and meetings.

It has definitely been worth all the effort and we have enjoyed witnessing the progress our Son has made and how he has flourished in the time he has spent with you.

I know he will miss you so much, as will we.

Please do stay in touch, you are truly amazing ,thank you”

“ We will never be able to thank you enough for all that you have done for our Son, not just at preschool but also prepping him for school to ensure he has the best possible start.

We are eternally grateful for that.

You are one in a million and have shown endless patience and love to him. You have been such a huge part of his journey and he will miss you very much.

Thank you for everything.

SEND



all different - all together