

Policy Statement on Special Educational Needs



# Special Educational Needs

## Introduction



I am very pleased to present Lambeth's revised Special Educational Needs Policy Statement that sets out the Policy framework within which the Authority will maintain and develop provision for pupils with special educational needs as prescribed in the 1996 Education Act and the SEN and Disability Act (2001).

This document sets out the principles and responsibilities for all those who are involved in education provision for pupils with special educational needs.

Within the context of Lambeth's Inclusion Policy, the Authority's policy is built on its vision of high quality learning for all children and young people throughout life and in meeting the needs of Lambeth's diverse community.

Therefore the Authority remains committed to maintain diversity of provision to meet the special educational needs of children and young people as they are identified.

Our Inclusion and SEN Policies are an integral part of the Education Development Plan and we will therefore promote inclusion as part of our strategy for improving pupil's learning and for raising achievement.

Lambeth has a clear statement of intent and will ensure that it works with its partners to maximise the opportunities for all children and young people in the community that we serve. Our aim is to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils by the principles of setting suitable challenges, responding to pupils diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of children and young people. The Children Act (2004) sets out the proposals for reforming the delivery of services for children, young people and families.

These proposals are complemented by the publication of the Government's SEN Strategy 'Removing Barriers to Achievement'. It builds on existing measures to ensure that all children have appropriate provision to develop their full potential. We will continue to work in collaboration with key services to achieve this. We will be working in close partnership with Governing Bodies, Headteachers, Health Agencies and Social Services, parents, other Council Services and Voluntary organisations to ensure that Lambeth consistently offers a continuum of support to individual pupils with special educational needs.

Phyllis Dunipace  
Executive Director of Education





## 1 PRINCIPLES

The Authority's policy for pupils with special educational needs is based on these principles:

- All pupils and students are entitled to an education which enables them to develop their full potential;
- The authority's policy on inclusion is central to all aspects of special educational needs provision, from the process of identifying needs through the education provision itself;
- The Authority remains committed to maintaining a diversity of provision to meet a wide range of special educational needs in the most appropriate setting.
- The authority will engender a sense of community and belonging through its inclusion ethos by developing and implementing a strategy that removes barriers to learning in order for all pupils to attain and achieve their individual potential by engaging all sections of the community using a multi-agency approach.
- Pupils and students with special educational needs will be educated with appropriate support, in mainstream schools, where this is desirable, practicable, and compatible with the wishes of the parent.
- All provision should be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of individual pupils;
- The Authority will develop provision in conjunction with other Council departments requirements under the community care legislation and the Children Act 1989 and in accordance with the provision's proposed in the Children Act 2004.
- The Authority considers that nursery and early years provision provides an important opportunity for the early identification of special educational needs and recognises that early intervention may prevent greater support being required at a later stage in the child's education;





## 2 RESPONSIBILITIES

### Local Education Authority

In the context of the 1996 Education Act, the SEN Disability Act 2001 and the principles stated above, the Authority have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure there is provision for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream and nursery schools through Early Years and School Action and Early Years and School Action Plus of the SEN Code of Practice, and to ensure there is specific provision for those pupils with more complex needs who require a full assessment and statement of those needs;
- To ensure that as far as possible governing bodies of maintained mainstream schools have sufficient resources available to enable them, through Lambeth's scheme of delegation (Fair Funding) under local management, to meet the special educational needs of the majority of their pupils;
- To ensure accountability for delegated resources and consistency of practice through the Statement Monitoring Service and an annual SEN moderation exercise of pupil records for children at School Action, School Action Plus with statements of SEN.
- To educate children with special educational needs in mainstream schools, provided that account has been taken of parents' views, and that education in a mainstream school is compatible with
  - a) the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs
  - b) efficient education of the other pupil with whom the child would be educated, and
  - c) the efficient use of resources.
- To ensure appropriate provision is available for the small number of pupils whose needs will be best met in a special school or other specialist provision, on short or long term placements;
- To ensure the early identification and assessment of special educational needs for those children whose special needs are such as to require the Authority to determine special educational needs provision;
- To ensure that all pupils with special educational needs have access to a broad and balanced curriculum suitably differentiated to meet their needs;
- To ensure that all pupils' differences are recognised and valued positively, their views, where possible are taken into account and are treated with equal respect.
- To undertake an advocacy role on behalf of parents and pupils to ensure that special educational needs are met and to work co-operatively with voluntary organisations in supporting parents and pupils, by providing financial support to voluntary organisations engaged in such work where possible.



- To promote a successful Parent Partnership Scheme with schools by working together with parent/carers of children with special educational needs to enable them to play an active role in their children's educational progress.
- To ensure the continued development of inclusive educational settings and resources to sustain them.
- To ensure that the designated Medical Officer for special educational needs has a strategic and operational role in co-ordinating activity across, Primary Care Trusts, Primary Care Groups and GPs.
- To produce and implement an Accessibility Strategy to facilitate the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools.
- To work collaboratively with essential services in the development of a Lambeth Information Sharing and Assessment (LISA) system of all vulnerable children at risk, within the local authority and across other agencies that provide service to children.
- To encourage the development of a change of culture by ensuring that essential information is appropriately shared among professionals.
- To agree shared objectives and priorities, based on analysis of service gaps.

## Governing Bodies

In the context of the 1996 Education Act, the SEN Disability Act 2001 and the principles as outlined above, governing bodies have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that the school has a whole school policy on special education needs which includes the arrangement for both the identification and provision for special needs, and that this information is available to parents;
- To do their best to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has special educational needs through School Action and School Action Plus;
- To ensure that a member of the governing body is named as the 'responsible person' for special educational needs;
- To ensure that teachers in the school are aware of the importance of their responsibility for identifying and providing for those pupils who have special educational needs.

- To ensure that arrangements are in place to enable a child with special educational needs who is educated in a mainstream school, participates in the activities of the school together with their peers so far as is reasonably practical and compatible with the child receiving special educational provision their learning needs call for and the efficient education of the pupils with whom they are educated and the efficient use of resources.
- To ensure that admission arrangements to the school do not discriminate against the admissions of children by virtue of their special educational needs.
- To ensure that the school has in place an access plan to facilitate access to the building and the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs;
- To consult the LEA and the governing bodies of other schools, when it seems to be necessary or desirable in the interests of co-ordinated special educational provision in the area as a whole.
- To report to parents on the implementation of the school's policy for pupils with special educational needs.





## Headteachers and teachers

In the context of the Education Act 1996, the SEN Disability Act 2001, and the principles outlined above head teachers and teachers have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that the school's special educational needs policy is implemented in line with the requirements of the current legislation, and is fully addressed in the school's development plan;
- To ensure that staff attend appropriate in – service training to support meeting the needs of pupils with special education needs.
- To ensure that arrangements are in place to report on the use of SEN funding to the Governing Body and that systems are in place for setting, monitoring and reviewing of IEP's and reviews of statements of SEN;
- To facilitate visits by the LEA's SEN Moderators, when requested, and to make available for inspection pupil records for those children at School Action, School Action Plus and with statements.

In Primary schools, individual class teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of all children in their class, and should have

access to at least one teacher with particular responsibility for pupils with special educational needs. That person should be given enough time free of other duties to offer advice and provide guidance to other class teachers.

In Secondary schools, one or more members of staff with specific expertise to concentrate on meeting pupils' special educational needs should be appointed. This will usually be the link to specialist services and advice outside the school.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child receives full time education suitable to age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents of pupils with Statements of SEN have a right to express a preference for school placement as well as the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal if it is not possible to reach agreement with the LEA regarding appropriate special educational needs provision.



### 3 PRACTICE

The authority will seek to ensure that the following practices are implemented:

- The needs of children and young people with special educational needs are identified and assessed quickly and matched by appropriate provision.
  - Each child's special educational needs must be identified and recorded, and their progress must be regularly reviewed in a manner consistent with the guidance in the Code of Practice on SEN (2002);
  - The curriculum is to be suitably differentiated and/or supported to ensure that there are clear objectives and targets appropriate for the child's level and potential for development;
  - Children with special educational needs can benefit from co-ordinated provision, by developing close partnerships with parents, schools, health and social services and voluntary sector.
  - Where possible, each child's special needs will be provided for in a mainstream school alongside his or her peers;
  - High quality support is provided for schools and early education settings – including, through educational psychology and other support services, and arrangements for sharing good practice in provision for children and young people with special educational needs.
  - Short term and longer term placements will be provided both at specialist centres and special schools where these are appropriate;
  - Teachers should be able to utilise additional support using delegated resources from within the school, and, where necessary seek external specialist support from the Authority support services, such as the educational psychology, behaviour or outreach support services;
  - Formal assessment of a child's special educational needs will be undertaken by the Authority, and all agencies involved will use their best endeavour to complete these within the recommended statutory timescale;
  - Placements in special schools or units will only be considered when it is clear that the pupil's needs cannot be met appropriately in a mainstream school; or would be incompatible with the efficient education of other pupils.
- Placement in special schools or provision outside Lambeth will be considered only when it is clear that the pupils needs cannot be met within a Lambeth school;
  - Residential provision will be considered only when appropriate day provision is not available, or cannot be made available within reasonable travelling distance of a child's home or where there are pressing social reasons for such a placement, in which case joint arrangements will be made within the multi-disciplinary arrangement that are in place between the education, social services and health departments;
  - Special Schools will continue to develop their expertise as Centres of Excellence providing specialist advice and support to mainstream schools;
  - Agencies working in the realm of special education needs will strive to follow the Authority's inclusion policy, which should permeate all aspects of school and the LEA thinking.
  - That all relevant agencies (such as education, social services and health) co-operate and co-ordinate their work to the general benefit of the pupils and their families, in particular in the early identification of special educational needs in the under fives.
  - That the designated Medical Officer co-ordinates the health services' advice for statutory assessment and, frequently, the participation in multi-agency meetings on assessments and making statements.





#### 4 IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

The process for the identification of special educational needs will be based on the procedure set out in the Authority's documents "Proposal to Begin a Statutory Assessment under the 1996 Education Act (ISA Packs for Schools and the Special Educational Needs Criteria".)

#### 5 PARENT PARTNERSHIP, PUPIL PARTICIPATION AND CONCILIATION SERVICE

The LEA has a statutory duty to provide Parent Partnership and Conciliation Services. Appropriately meeting the special educational needs of all pupils can only be achieved by active partnership between all those involved in the educational process. It is therefore essential to work in partnership with Governing Bodies, Headteachers, parents and staff in schools to develop effective ways of meeting the needs of all pupils in mainstream school in accordance with the Code of Practice and the special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

The LEA will therefore ensure that:

- We are accessible, welcoming and value the views and involvement of parents
- Information is available in a range of appropriate languages and variety of mediums, so that all parents for whom English is not their first language, and those with a disability or learning difficulties can access the information.
- Links with voluntary organisations are established and maintained
- We will arrange for the parent of any child whom they are responsible for with special educational needs to be provided with advice and information about matters relating to those needs.
- We will endeavour to make Parent Partnership Services known to parents, headteachers, schools and others the LEA considers appropriate.
- The Parent Partnership Service demonstrates independence and credibility in working towards early and informal dispute resolution that can prevent long-term problems.

- The provision of accurate, neutral information on parents rights, roles and responsibilities within the SEN process, and on the range of options available, to enable them to make informed decisions.
- Steps are taken to resolve any disputes or disagreement with parents at a local level, without recourse to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

## Pupil Participation

Children, who are capable of forming views, have a right to receive and make known information, to express an opinion, and to have that option taken into account in any matters affecting them. The views of children should be given due weight according to age, maturity and capability of the child. The LEA therefore has a critical role in encouraging and supporting pupil participation across all phases of education and will:

- Consult children and young people with special educational needs wherever possible in the assessment, planning and review of their special educational needs
- Develop training options to build the confidence and competence of all staff in working with children, however complex their needs.
- Develop and modify the information for children and young people with special educational needs
- Encourage schools and other service providers to provide clear and accurate information about the child's special educational needs and the purpose of the assessment, individual educational plan or any other intervention.



## 6 PROVISION

Nursery, primary and secondary schools are resourced to meet the needs of the majority of children with special educational needs. Additional provision maintained by the Authority is set out below. This provision is currently under review in Phase III of the special educational need strategy.

### SPECIAL SCHOOLS

#### Day Schools

Elm Court  
Mixed Needs (MN) (Secondary)

Lansdowne  
Mixed Needs (MN) (Secondary)

Livity  
Complex Needs (CN) (Primary)

Michael Tippett  
Complex Needs (CN) (Secondary)

Turney  
Mixed Needs (MN) (All Age)

Willowfield  
Emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) (Secondary)

#### Specialist Centres

The Jubilee Centre  
Hearing Impaired (HI)

Kings Avenue  
Visual Impairment (VI)

Wyvil Language Unit  
Language

Larkhall Centre  
Autism





### **Support to Mainstream Schools Early Support for Pupils with Special Educational Needs**

A range of provision is available for pre school children assessed as having special educational needs at Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus (SEN Code of Practice). This includes the pre-school home visiting provided by the Early Years Support Service, teachers of the hearing impaired and visually impaired and additional learning support assistant allocations at the nursery schools. These services provide school based support to pupils at School Action and School Action Plus of the assessment process.

### **Education Psychology Service**

Lambeth Educational Psychology Service supports the achievement of children and young people aged 0 – 19 years by promoting child development and learning through the application of psychology. It does this by working with individuals and groups of children, and through consultation with teachers and other adults in schools, families, LEA officers, social services and other agencies.

Educational Psychologists are also involved in Government initiatives e.g. Sure Start, BEST, YOT etc.

All schools, including special schools and early years centres, are offered a statutory Educational Psychology service that provides support to pupils, teachers, parents and governors. In addition schools are able to use their delegated funding to buy in further visits which are carried out by a named Educational Psychologist.

The Educational Psychology team works with schools to help them plan how to meet the individual needs of pupils and supports the development of organisational targets set in their school development plans.

The service offers an annual INSET programme, which, is a combination of centre-based training and training in individual institutions. All Educational Psychologists have a Psychology degree, at least 2 years teaching experience and a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology.



## Buy Back Service

The SEN Buy Back Service aims to provide a high quality, specialist service to Lambeth Primary and Secondary schools for pupils with literacy difficulties and speech and language difficulties. The service is actively committed to promoting social and educational inclusion through equitable access to all services and provision. Behaviour Educational and Social Difficulties In keeping abreast with the National Strategy for reducing street crime Lambeth's Behaviour Improvement Programme supports specific schools organised in "cluster groups" with the aim of improving school attendance and behaviour. Additionally, targeted cluster groups are supported by its own Behaviour and Education Support Team (BEST), a multi-agency team, which includes providing training to parents around supporting children with challenging behaviour and other identified issues.

## Pupil Referral Unit and Hospital Tuition Service

The Secondary and Primary Pupil Referral Unit (S/PPRU) provide interim education for pupils without a mainstream school primarily, through temporary or permanent exclusion. The aim is to provide high quality service in a caring and safe environment to those pupils and their carers who need short term intervention so that they are re-integrated into mainstream education. The Hospital School and Tuition service provides education for pupils who are unable to attend school for health reasons.

## Jubilee Centre for Pupils with a Hearing Impairment

Specialist Teachers of the deaf, nursery nurses and support staff who work as a team staffs Jubilee Centre. The Centre has 30 places for hearing impaired pupils from nursery up to year six. Staff provides specialist support to pupils both within small groups in the Centre and in main school inclusion sessions. Total communication is the approach used in the Centre and when pupils are supported in the main school. The teacher in charge of the Jubilee Centre also manages a Hearing Impaired Support Service.

## Kings Avenue Centre for Pupils with Visual Impairment

The Visual Impairment Support Service provides support to children from 0-16 years who have visual impairment. Staff provide specialist support to mainstream, special schools and pre-school children at home and support inclusive education by close liaison with multi-agency services, such as health and social services to meet the needs of individual pupils.

## Wyvil Language Centre

The language Centre was established in April 2001 to support pupils between the age range 4-11 years who have language impairment as their primary special educational need. The Centre uses specialist resources and operates a total communication approach that includes the use of symbols and Makaton signing. Opportunities are provided for all pupils to be included in a mainstream setting.

## Larkhall Centre for Pupils with Autism

The Autistic Centre at Larkhall School provides stated provision for primary aged pupils with autism. The Centre works closely with the Primary School to provide a measure of inclusion for the pupils in the Centre, and pupils from the school spend time in the Centre working alongside the Centre pupils. The Centre also provides an Outreach Service for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in other schools.

## Youth Offending Service

The Youth Offending Team (YOT) is a multi agency service with staff drawn from the Police, Health, Education, Social Service and Probation. The key aim of the service is to prevent offending and re-offending by children and young people using a range of intervention and methods. To achieve its aims, the service works closely with both the voluntary and statutory sectors to ensure as far as possible that vulnerable children and young people are provided with appropriate services to enhance their personal and social development and challenge their offending behaviour. Parents and/or carers of young offenders who would like to develop their parenting skills and self-confidence are also able to access parenting provision provided through the YOT by a voluntary sector provider.



If you have difficulty understanding this leaflet because English is not your first language please contact one of the organisations below.

Languages are to be inserted here.



For further information contact:  
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