

## Early Years Planning And Review Meeting

Early years planning and review meetings take place across West Sussex each term to discuss and plan for pre-school children who may have special educational needs or disabilities. This information can be passed to your child's first school, to help your child make a good start, or to assist with making a decision about carrying out an EHC Needs Assessment.

A number of children start school with SEN Support rather than having an EHC Needs Assessment or EHC Plan in place. If this is the case for your child, do not worry; your child will not be without support. The school will closely monitor how they are doing, and they have the opportunity to request an EHC Needs Assessment if appropriate.

## Starting School Age

If your child has attended a pre-school or playgroup regularly and has been receiving help there for special educational needs, then this information will be passed on to your child's new school before they start there. This will help the school to plan for your child's arrival and to ensure that everything is in place.

The help provided at school may not be the same as they were receiving at pre-school, but it should still be appropriate to support your child's needs.

Almost all children with special educational needs are educated in a local mainstream school. All schools have funds to provide the additional and different help which these children may need.

If your child has not been attending an early years setting, then you will need to take any reports and paperwork about your child with you to the school of your choice and tell the school why you think that your child has special educational needs. This will help the staff to plan for your child's arrival.

## Statutory School Age

Statutory School Age is the period when all children have to attend full time education. However, all children are entitled to two terms of part-time schooling prior to statutory school age. Statutory School Age is the term following your child's 5th birthday, to the last Friday in June of the year in which they will be 16.

Your child is entitled to up to 15 hours a week of funded nursery education from the term following their 3rd birthday (in some cases this may be from the term following their 2nd birthday if certain conditions are met)

## How to contact us

### SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

Oriel Lodge  
West Street  
Chichester  
West Sussex  
PO19 1RZ

**Email:** [send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk)

**Website:** <https://westsussex.local-offer.org/services/7>

**Tel:** 0330 222 8555

**The role of the WS SEND IAS is to ensure that all parents have access to impartial information, advice and support so they can make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs. Any information that is shared with the WS SEND IAS is in confidence unless permission has been obtained to share this with other individuals, services and agencies that may be able to help the family with their circumstances.**

**SEND** = Special Educational Needs and Disabilities



[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

WS1109 07.15

# West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service

## Special Educational Needs in the Early Years



## Early Years

For many children, an early years learning setting is their first experience of learning with a group of children away from home, family and friends. Your child will be looked after by the staff at the setting. They have a responsibility for planning and supporting every child's learning, including children who have special educational needs.

All children develop and make progress at different rates. Children who need a lot of extra help may already be receiving help through their local Portage Service, and may also be seen by a Paediatrician at a Child Development Centre.

## Who can I talk to if I have concerns about my child?

If you think your child may have special educational needs or a disability and may need additional support to learn and develop, you can speak to your Health Visitor, family doctor or your child's pre-school setting. Your concerns could be about your child's:

- play and learning
- speech and language
- social development and behaviour
- physical development
- vision or hearing

Your doctor or health visitor may want to contact other health professionals, for example staff based at one of the Child Development Centres, to help look more closely at your child's needs.

If your child's needs have already been recognised, you may already be seeing professionals such as a hospital specialist, a paediatrician, or receiving help through the Portage Service.

## What can a Pre-School do to support my child?

All pre-schools who receive Government funding will have a member of staff appointed as the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) also known as an Inclusion Co-ordinator. They should follow the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, which gives them guidance on supporting children with special educational needs, and should also have a written special needs policy.

If you or your child's pre-school think that your child may have special educational needs, it will be important for you to both work together to support your child. You can talk to any of the staff in your child's pre-school, including the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who is the member of staff with responsibility for planning support for children with special educational needs.

### What can the SENCo do?

- take the lead in further assessment of your child's needs
- plan future support through SEN support
- ensure that appropriate records are kept of your child's progress
- ensure they talk to you and other professionals involved with your child, also advise and support other pre-school staff

The pre-school will want to plan with you the best way of meeting your child's needs. This could include:

- building on your child's strengths and what s/he can do,
- providing appropriate toys and materials, or
- agreeing approaches to be used

Through helping your child in this way, you may decide with the pre-school that your child's needs are being met.



## What is SEN Support?

It may be that your child needs extra or different help for him/her to make progress. If this is the case, the SENCo will collect more information about your child from you and other people working with your son or daughter. You will play an essential role in this process of working together, by sharing your views about your child's needs and how to help. Young children may be able to express their own views given appropriate support to do so.

The SENCo will write a support plan (sometimes known as an IEP, ILP or Play Plan) for your child. This will set 3-4 targets for your child to achieve, with support, and will suggest activities and ways of playing and working with your child. You will continue to be involved as your child's progress is monitored and reviewed through this support plan.

It may be that the SENCo will need to ask for advice and support from outside support services such as the Educational Psychology Service, a Health Professional or the FIRST Visiting Team.

The FIRST Team is a Local Authority service, supporting all early years providers in meeting the needs of their children. They will work with you, your child and the pre-school staff to plan specific support for a range of needs, including learning, behaviour or sensory difficulties. The Sensory Support Team would also be involved if child is visually or hearing impaired.

### What if my child needs more help?

The support provided through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus will help your child to learn and develop.

Sometimes, the pre-school and other support services may not be able to provide all the help that your child needs. All involved will carefully consider whether it would be appropriate to ask the Local Authority to start a EHC Needs Assessment of your child's needs, which may lead to an EHC plan. The Local Authority will need to know that all other alternatives have been tried and that over a period of time, your child has made little or no progress.

Parents can also make a request for an EHC Needs Assessment. Contact West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service for more information.