

Support for children of school age

This section looks at the support you can expect from your child's school.

Most children of school age who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities will attend a mainstream school. Mainstream schools include all state-funded schools, including academies and free schools.

If your child has a disability, whether or not they have SEN, their school must make reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids (such as tactile signage or induction loops) and services to prevent them being put at a substantial disadvantage. Schools also have wider duties to prevent discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.

If you think your child has SEN or a disability, you should talk to your school – starting with the class teacher. Every school has to have a teacher who co-ordinates the SEN provision in the school called a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)

http://www.westberkssendiass.info/westberks_dev/index.php/Who's_involved_-_SENCo and you might also need to talk to them.

If your child's school thinks your child has SEN, they should talk to you to see what you think and gather evidence such as reports about your child's progress. If they decide to provide your child with support for their SEN, they must tell you. If your child has SEN, your school needs to use its best endeavours – that means to do its very best – to give your child the support they need. That could include getting advice and support from specialists outside the school (such as an educational psychologist, a speech and language therapist or a specialist teaching and advisory service).

Children with SEN will be provided with SEN support

<http://fis.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/fsd/localoffer.page?familychannel=4-3>. The support provided is to help children achieve the outcomes or learning objectives that have been set for them. SEN support can take many forms. This could include:

- A special learning programme for your child
- Extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant
- Making or changing materials and equipment
- Working with your child in a small group
- Observing your child in class or at break and keeping records
- Helping your child to take part in the class activities

- Making sure that your child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult
- Helping other children to work with your child, or play with them at break time
- Supporting your child with physical or personal care difficulties, such as eating, getting around school safely, toileting or dressing

Your child's school must provide you with an annual report on your child's progress. They should talk to you regularly about your child's progress, (at least three times a year), set clear outcomes and produce a report of these as well as the action taken and support agreed, and you may want to ask for this to be outside of the regular parents' evening. It's important that the views of your child are included in these discussions.

If the school, despite its best endeavours, can't meet your child's needs then you should consider whether your child might need an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment which might lead to an EHC plan <http://fis.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/fsd/localoffer.page?familychannel=4-2-6&sortfield=title&sorttype=field>. You should discuss this with your child's school (your child's class teacher or the school's SENCO).

Your child's school must publish an SEN Information Report on their website, and keep the report up to date. The report needs to include things like:

- The kinds of SEN support the school provides
- Their approach to teaching children and young people with SEN
- What arrangements they have for consulting parents and involving them in their child's education (and also for engaging young people directly)

Your child's school also needs to set out what arrangements they have for admitting children with disabilities, what steps they are taking to make sure children with disabilities are treated fairly and not discriminated against, what facilities are provided for disabled children and what plans they have for improving access in the future.

Many children with an EHC plan will be taught in mainstream schools, but some may be taught in special schools. Special schools only provide education for children and young people with special educational needs. In the same way that mainstream schools do, special schools should regularly discuss with you your child's education and the support they offer, and keep you up to date with their progress.

If your child has an EHC plan, you can make a request for a non-maintained special school, or for an independent school or independent specialist college (where approved for this purpose by the Secretary of State and published in a

list available to all parents and young people). The local authority must comply with your preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless provision there is considered to not meet their needs, not represent good value for money or would impact negatively on the education of others. You may also request a place at an independent school or independent specialist college that is not on the published list and the local authority must consider your request. The local authority is not under the same duty to name the provider and should be satisfied that the institution would admit the child or young person before naming it in a plan since these providers are not subject to the duty to admit a child or young person even if named in their plan.

Where an independent school is named on the EHC plan the local authority is obliged to provide the funding to meet the provision set out in the plan.

Further Information

For more information about SEN or disabilities for school aged children, please look at Chapter 6 of the 0-25 SEND Code of Practice

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>.

The West Berkshire Local Offer

<http://fis.westberks.gov.uk/kb5/westberkshire/fsd/localoffer.page> sets out what support is available to all children and young people with SEN or disabilities.

You can also speak to us

http://www.westberkssendiass.info/westberks_dev/index.php/About_us