

General Information about Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

What are Special Educational Needs (SEN)?

Children and young people with SEN have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children and young people of the same age. These children and young people may need extra or different help from that given to others.

What are the areas of SEND?

Communicating and interacting – for example, where children and young people have speech, language and communication difficulties which make it difficult for them to make sense of language or to understand how to communicate effectively and appropriately with others

Cognition and learning – for example, where children and young people learn at a slower pace than others their age, have difficulty in understanding parts of the curriculum, have difficulties with organisation and memory skills, or have a specific difficulty affecting one particular part of their learning performance such as in literacy or numeracy

Social, emotional and mental health difficulties – for example, where children and young people have difficulty in managing their relationships with other people, are withdrawn, or if they behave in ways that may hinder their and other children's learning, or that have an impact on their health and wellbeing

Sensory and/or physical needs – for example, children and young people with visual and/or hearing impairments, or a physical need that means they must have additional ongoing support and equipment

Some children and young people may have SEN that covers more than one of these areas.

What are disabilities?

Many children and young people who have SEN may also have a disability. A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' This includes, for example, sensory impairments such as those that affect sight and hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.

The Equality Act requires that schools:

- must not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise disabled children and young people
- must make reasonable adjustments so that disabled children and young people are not disadvantaged compared with other children and young people.

Where can I get further information?

DfE Special educational needs and disability: A guide for parents and carers

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf

Information Advice Support Service for SEND in Northants <https://www.iasnorthants.co.uk>

Local Offer: <https://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/councilservices/children-families-education/send/local-offer/Pages/default.aspx>

What is SEND support?

Any support your child gets from their school should meet their needs. If your child has SEND, they will be able to access help, called SEND support, from their school and via the local authority local offer. SEND support is part of what is known as the 'graduated approach' and in general should work as follows. You may be contacted by your child's teacher or SENDCO if your school think your child needs SEN support. Or you can approach your child's school or other setting if you think your child might have SEND. You will be involved and your views will be needed throughout the process, and you will be kept up to date with the progress made. Young people aged 16 to 25 will be fully involved in designing their own SEN support and provision.

The four stages of SEN support are:

Assess: Your child's difficulties must be assessed so that the right support can be provided. This should include, for example, asking you what you think, talking to professionals who work with your child (such as their teacher), and looking at records and other information. This needs to be reviewed regularly so that the support provided continues to meet your child's needs. That might mean getting advice and further assessment from someone like an educational psychologist, a specialist teacher or a health professional.

Plan: Your school will agree, with your involvement, the outcomes that the SEN support is intended to achieve and deciding what kind of support will be provided, and decide a date by which they will review this so that they can check to see how well the support is working and whether the outcomes have been or are being achieved.

Do: We will put the planned support into place. Teachers remain responsible for working with your child on a daily basis, but the SENDCO and any support staff or specialist teaching staff involved in providing support will work closely to track your child's progress and effectiveness of support.

Review: The support your child receives should be reviewed at the time agreed in the plan. You can then decide together if the support is having a positive impact, whether the outcomes have been, or are being, achieved and if or how any changes should be made.

What is the Local Offer?

The Local Offer in West Northamptonshire has a team that provides information for families with children who have a special educational need or disability, improve choice and transparency for these families, help professionals to understand the range of services and provision available locally and improve services by setting out in a single place what is available locally. You and the school can use the Local Offer information to see what help is available that may help achieve your child's outcomes.

What is an Education, Health and Care needs assessment and plan?

NSG will often be able to meet the needs of children through SEN support. But sometimes a child or young person needs a more intensive level of specialist help that cannot be met from the resources available to us and other settings to provide SEN support. Here, you or the school could consider asking our local authority for an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment for your child. This assessment could lead to your child getting an EHC plan. An EHC plan brings your child's education, health and social care needs into a single, legal document. Your child must have special educational needs to be eligible for a plan.

Who can request an EHC needs assessment?

You, anyone at your child's school or others who work with your child (such as your doctor/ health visitor) can ask your local authority for an EHC needs assessment if you think your child needs one.

A Parent / Carer Guide to Inclusion and SEND at NSG

How is SEND identified at Northampton School for Girls?

If you think your child has SEN or a disability, you should talk to your school – start with the tutor or Head of Academic Standards. Every school has to have a teacher who co-ordinates the SEN provision in the school called a SENDCO (Special Needs Co-ordinator) and you might also need to talk to them.

If professionals at NSG think your child may have SEND, we will talk to you to see what you think and gather evidence such as reports about your child's progress. If we decide to provide your child with support for their SEN, we will tell you.

Some students will already have SEND identified at their primary school. Once offered a place at NSG we will work very closely with you and your child's primary school to ensure a smooth transition of information so that appropriate provision can be maintained.

What information do you use to identify SEND?

We use a range of information to assess your child's needs. This includes information from your child's primary school including assessments. On arrival at NSG students will complete CAT4 baseline testing and students are screened for dyslexia and dyscalculia. Further screening tests for processing and memory may also be offered/used.

Beyond this, all teachers are fully trained professional experts who use their knowledge and formative and summative assessments to judge your child's progress against expectations.

How are students with an identified SEND supported at NSG?

Once identified we will do our very best to give your child the support they need. This begins with the creation of an individual Student Learning Plan (SLP) which sets targets, outlines information about your child's strengths and needs, and the best ways to support them in the classroom, in school and sometimes beyond school. We have 3 levels of support which we refer to as Wave 1, 2 and 3.

Wave 1: Most students are supported by wave 1 which is in class support. Here teachers will adapt their lesson planning to utilise the strategies that appear on the SLP to meet your child's needs. This may also be supplemented by a special learning programme for your child, extra help from a teacher or a learning support assistant helping your child to take part in the class activities and making sure that your child has understood things by encouraging them to ask questions and to try something they find difficult or making or changing materials and equipment.

Wave 2: We recognise that the best place for your child is in the classroom with the subject experts however, we also recognise that some students may require some further short-term support to help them access their learning in the classroom. Students may move to wave 2 support if teachers or parents/carers identify that more help may be required. At NSG, we have 3 elements of **planned provision** to support your child at Wave 2. These are called **Aspire and Advance, Boost and Focus**.

Wave 3: At this level this includes gaining specialist 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.

What does the planned provision look like?

Aspire and Advance: provides specialist support for students who find it difficult to cope with a full secondary school curriculum. Specialist teaching expertise and timetabling support students to access a hybrid curriculum of lesson time with their peers and specialist small group and individual support.

Boost: some students require a boost in a specific element of the curriculum. Here, students could be withdrawn for a short period for specific sessions and additional support in literacy, numeracy and/or language development for EAL students, with fully qualified specialist teachers.

Focus: our pastoral or subject curriculum teams may request some students to get additional support by referring to our inclusion team. **Focus** provides short-term programmes and support aimed to support students to get quickly back into the classroom.

How is equipment or materials adapted to help our child who has an identified SEND?

Following needs-based assessment, there are a variety of ways that we can support students by adapting the classroom and/or personal equipment. This may include the size and font of texts, coloured papers and overlays, the use of specialist IT equipment, use of specialist furniture, adapting specialist equipment / activities (ie sports equipment /activity).

How does NSG involve parents and carers in the support of our child?

All parents/carers of students at NSG (whether SEND or not) will receive reports on your child's progress. For students with an identified SEND we will talk to parents/carers regularly about your child's progress, set clear targets and outcomes and review the SLP, record actions taken and support agreed. This may happen within or outside of the regular parents' evening.

How is my child's voice represented?

It's important that the views of your child are included in the discussions about how we are working together as a school and parents/carers to help to meet their needs. Therefore, we ensure that we speak regularly to students about their progress, their strengths and the areas they are finding more difficult and include them in the solution finding and review process.

What if we require even more support?

We will often be able to meet the needs of children through SEN support. But if, despite our best endeavours, we can't meet your child's needs then we can consider alongside you whether your child might need an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment which might lead to an EHC plan. An EHC plan brings your child's education, health and social care needs into a single, legal document. Your child must have special educational needs to be eligible for a plan.

Where can I find out more?

You can find our more information on our website at the following link:

<https://www.nsg.northants.sch.uk/parents/advice-and-support/special-education>

This includes a link to the SEND Information Report 2022/23 and include things like: the kinds of SEN support the school provides, our 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 links to many supporting services for further information and advice.