

ST. MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



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Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Policy (“SEND”)

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Pupils in St Margaret Clitherow Catholic Primary School are happy, confident and very proud of their school. They clearly understand their mission statement, ‘Jesus lives in us, our families, our school, our church, our world. Jesus is our guide, let us follow Him.’ They can quote scripture to give examples of how they do their best to follow Jesus every day. Pupils explain that if they ever feel worried about something they are confident that adults will help them in a discreet and caring way. They are fully aware of their responsibilities towards the more vulnerable members of society and can reference Catholic social teaching when discussing their work with the local foodbank.

Catholic Schools Inspectorate October 2024

Pupils enjoy school. They respond well to the high expectations of staff. Pupils strive to do their best and achieve well. Pupils are extremely kind and caring. They frequently give up their free time to help each other. Lessons are free from disruption and lunchtimes are a buzz of happy and harmonious play.

Ofsted May 2024

Miss Carmela Puccio
Mrs Elizabeth King
Miss Rachel Brassington

Headteacher
Special Educational Needs Governor
Special Educational Needs Coordinator

1 Policy Aims

Our school sees that all children are beautiful, unique people made in God's image. This commitment to the individual needs of our children underpins this policy.

All the information in this Policy is based on the legislation which came into place in September 2014 with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice – the SEND CoP – and this policy is updated annually. The SEND CoP is based on other documents, referenced below.

This policy is to provide information about how our school supports all our children and those who may need more educational support. It outlines how provision is managed, organised and allocated, how children are identified, monitored and assessed, the wider responsibility of the governors and the importance of parental partnership.

1.1 WHAT ARE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES?

All children need support in school and learn in different ways. But to be classed as having 'Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities' – we use the acronym 'SEN' or 'SEND' – this must fulfil certain criteria and a process of assessment must take place.

The SEND code of Practice 0-25 (January 2015) states: *"A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.*

A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or*
- has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post -16 institutions."*

SEND Code of Practice xiv page 15/16

But there are some causes of lower attainment or limited progress which are not classed as SEN. Reasonable adjustments should always be provided for physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on a child's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. (Equality Act, 2010; SEND CoP, p.16). Other needs, such as attendance and punctuality, health and welfare, English as an Additional Language (EAL), receiving Pupil Premium Grant (PP) money, being a child of a serviceman/woman, or having a disability may not be classed as an SEN. Short term needs, like bereavement, are not Special Needs but there are many life events that can cause longer-term needs which require support.

A child with Special Educational Needs may not be a lower attainer or achiever – challenges to learning will be different for all children but it is hoped that they will be supported to help them achieve their academic potential.

Hertfordshire County Council outline clearly what provision is to be expected at different levels of need. This provision is available on the local offer website.

1.2 WHAT ARE THE SEND CATEGORIES AND WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

SEND CoP describe four broad areas of need which have been identified as the possible barriers to learning (p.97-98):

Communication and Interaction

Cognition and Learning

Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Sensory and / or Physical disability

The following list is not exhaustive but to give some common examples under each heading.

1.2.1 Communication and Interaction

This heading could include Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN).

Speech needs could mean stuttering, stammering or articulation concerns. Many children start school with a few sounds still to develop but if this becomes a barrier to their educational process, they may need support.

Language needs may suggest a child that does not confidently have the words and vocabulary that other children their age do.

Communication may include those with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) or Disorder (ASD) and is about how children talk to others around them, including gesture and eye-contact.

1.2.2 Cognition and Learning

This category describes those for whom progress is slower than may be expected for a variety of reasons – perhaps working memory speed or a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) like Dyslexia or Dyscalculia. There are also the terms Moderate and Severe Learning Difficulties (MLD, SLD).

1.2.3 Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

Children who struggle with their SEMH may find it difficult to access their learnings, develop relationships and feel safe in school, depending on the severity of their need.

Social skills may be lacking or lagging and a child needs support with turn-taking in games, conversations and team activities.

Emotional health concerns might be the category of children that find it hard to self-regulate and manage their feelings. This could be due to being impulsive, feeling insecure or having low self-esteem or due to a historical trauma that has not resolved for them.

Mental Health is a growing area of understanding. All of us have good and bad mental health days, just as we do physical health, but for those who have ongoing worries and concerns they would be considered to have Mental Health as a barrier to learning.

1.2.4 Sensory and /or physical disability

Children with a sensory need may be associated with other needs, such as those with ASC. Sensory processing issues are not uncommon but are all very unique for each child. Other physical disabilities are often supported by Health professionals who provide the advice and support to make adjustments for those needs. This could be Hearing Impairment (HI) or Visual Impairment (VI), or a Physical or neurological impairment (PNI) which would include chromosomal disorders or brain damage.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 PARENTS

It is central to all our children's success that a close working relationship between parents and the school exists. This is supported throughout the SEND CoP, where parent voice is at the heart of conversations, to hear the needs and wishes of the family. It is our endeavor to inform parents of how their child is supported and we welcome parent feedback and conversations about how they feel the provision is working, or not working.

We contact parents throughout the year, at parents' evenings, through letters, emails, parent courses and through informal and formal meetings. We encourage parents to take up these opportunities and regular contact with the SENCo is welcomed.

Parents are encouraged to access information more widely about SEND including through the Herts Local Offer website where parent groups and courses are publicised. Many of the courses offered locally are sent out by the SENCO to a parenting mailing list. This is open to

all who are interested but anyone on the SEND register will be added to the list.

Our school is part of a network of schools in Stevenage called DSPL2 – Delivering Specialist Provision Locally area 2. The DSPL2 website also shares information about locally offered services and parents are invited to access this information themselves.

2.2 CLASS TEACHERS

Class teachers are responsible for teaching every child in their class including those with SEND.

“All children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to: achieve their best; become confident individuals living fulfilling lives; make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training” SEND Code of Practice 6.1 page 92

Teachers are expected to have an awareness of Special Needs (p.68,69 SEND Cop), especially those high incidence needs which are common in our setting. For children with higher needs, or frequently occurring needs, it would be expected that teachers would develop a more enhanced knowledge of needs. For example, in our setting, our Early Years Team are confident in assessing and planning for children with speech and language needs. They use the Wellcomm assessment to identify children's strengths and areas of need, they teach a programme to develop those who may have areas that need more practice. This is universal provision (which means all children access it).

The Senco leads and signposts training to develop teachers' skills and awareness of ways to support children with educational needs. Money is allocated annually from the budget to support this as well as developing the teaching assistants who implement many of the interventions.

Our ethos of inclusion means that it is our aim for all children to access the broad, rich, deep curriculum through the class teaching of our team. This means that our focus on intervention is to enable access to the class and maintain their presence in the classroom through adaptations and differentiation, wherever possible. Some specialist teaching must happen away from the class group e.g. Braille learning or individual Speech Therapy.

2.3 SENCo

The SENCo in our school is Miss Rachel Brassington and is the teacher with responsibility for the implementation of this policy. Miss Brassington is completing her NPQSENCO Award and holds a PGCE in Primary Education with QTS, and BSc in Psychology. Miss Brassington is always taking up training and finding suitable training for the other members of staff. Miss Brassington also looks for training and support opportunities for parents.

2.4 GOVERNORS

It is the **Governors** aim to ensure the needs of all pupils are prioritised so that each child is able to receive the full range of educational experiences we offer, implemented by the Headteacher and the SENCo. Governors Duties in Appendix A. Our SEND Governor is Mrs Elizabeth King, who oversees the work of the SENCo.

Through termly meetings with the SEND Governor and the SENCo, the Governors evaluate the provision within our school. Data is collated and shared and a SEND report is shared as part of the Head Teacher's report when communicating termly with the Governing body.

3 PROVISION AND PROCESSES

Monitoring and supporting children are managed through a 'graduated response'. The identification of any provision for children with SEND is a whole school responsibility.

3.1 Quality First Teaching

Children all access the curriculum through quality first teaching which is present in our classrooms. Lessons are adapted to meet the individual needs of the children in the class and may include additional support from the teacher or teaching assistant. The class teacher remains responsible for supporting the child on a daily basis, as well as planning and delivering a personalised programme of learning. Alongside high-quality classroom teaching, some children may also benefit from extra support in small groups or, where appropriate, on a one-to-one basis.

Teachers are responsible and accountable for the progress and development of the pupils in their class, including where pupils access support from teaching assistants or specialist staff. (SEND Code of Practice 2015 page 99).

All children are assessed as a normal function of our school teaching and learning. Some of this is formally through the assessments, termly reviews (summative) and some daily in class discussions and marking (formative). Some of this is more informal such as through observations.

3.2 Identifying SEND

The school uses a range of indicators to identify pupils who may have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Identification is based on a clear analysis of a child's needs and may include information gathered from a variety of sources.

These indicators may include:

- Analysis of attainment and progress data, including:
 - Entry baseline assessments and Foundation Stage Profile outcomes
 - End of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assessment data
 - Phonics screening assessments
 - Reading assessments and ages
 - Termly and annual pupil assessments
 - WellComm Speech and Language screening
 - Individual Assessment of Early Learning and Development (IAELD)
 - Blank Level Questioning assessments
- Discussions regarding pupil progress during termly Pupil Progress Meetings between teachers and Senior Leaders
- Concerns raised by class teachers or other school staff
- Concerns raised by parents/carers
- Information shared by previous schools, nurseries or educational settings upon transfer;
- Information and assessments provided by external agencies or other professionals involved with the child.

The decision to provide additional SEND support will be informed by evidence showing that, despite receiving quality first teaching, adapted learning opportunities and targeted teaching strategies, a child:

- Makes little or no progress in specific areas of learning
- Continues to work at levels significantly below those expected for a child of a similar age
- Shows difficulties in developing literacy or mathematical skills which result in poor attainment across areas of the curriculum
- Experiences emotional or behavioural difficulties which regularly and substantially interfere with their own learning or that of others
- Has sensory or physical needs and continues to make limited progress despite the provision of specialist equipment or adaptations
- Has ongoing communication and/or interaction difficulties that impact the development of social relationships and create barriers to learning

The identification of SEND is a collaborative process involving teachers, the SENCo, parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child. Early identification allows appropriate support and interventions to be implemented promptly in order to support progress, wellbeing and inclusion.

3.3 SEND Support

Where a child is identified as having Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), the school will provide support that is additional to or different from the adapted approaches and learning arrangements normally available as part of high-quality teaching. Children identified as requiring SEN Support will be placed on the school's SEND register and support will be delivered through a graduated approach in line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015).

The graduated approach follows the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do, Review.

Assess: The class teacher and SENCO will assess the pupil's needs using observations, assessment data, pupil and parent views, and information from previous settings or external professionals. This helps identify barriers to learning and the support required.

Plan: Where SEN Support is required, targets, strategies, interventions and expected outcomes will be set. Plans may include classroom adaptations, targeted interventions, specialist resources or external agency advice.

Do: The class teacher remains responsible for the pupil's day-to-day learning and will work closely with the SENCO and support staff to deliver and monitor agreed provision. Support may include adaptive teaching, small group interventions, additional adult support or specialist programmes.

Review: Provision and progress will be reviewed regularly to evaluate the effectiveness of support and identify next steps.

Parents/ carers, and the child where appropriate, will be involved in the process. The cycle will run over a term and then will start again.

Where a child continues to make limited progress despite targeted support, the school may seek advice from external specialists and, where appropriate, consider requesting an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).

3.4 External/ Specialist Support

Where a child continues to make less than expected progress despite high-quality teaching and targeted SEND support, the school may seek advice and involvement from specialist external agencies. External support may also be sought when a child presents with a specific difficulty or complex need requiring specialist assessment, guidance or intervention.

The SENCO will work collaboratively with parents/carers, teaching staff and relevant professionals to identify the most appropriate support for the pupil. Consent from parents/carers will be obtained before referrals are made, unless there is a safeguarding concern where different procedures apply.

Specialist and external services may include, but are not limited to:

- Early Years SEND Team
- Early Years Emotional Wellbeing and Behaviour Specialists (EWB)
- Speech, Language, Communication and Autism Team (SLCA)
- The Cognition and Learning Advisory team (CL)
- Deaf and Hearing Support Services (DHSS)
- Vision Impairment Team (VI)
- Multi-sensory Impairment Team (MSI)
- Physical and Neurological Impairment (PNI)
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- School Nursing Service

- Social Care and Early Help services
- Outreach support from specialist provisions or local schools

External professionals may:

- Carry out observations or assessments
- Provide recommendations and strategies for school and home
- Support staff training and modelling of interventions
- Contribute to provision plans and review meetings

The school follows a graduated approach of Assess, Plan, Do, Review and will ensure that advice from specialists is incorporated into classroom practice and targeted support plans. Outcomes and provision will be monitored regularly in partnership with parents/carers and, where appropriate, the child.

The SENCO will maintain regular communication with all professionals involved to ensure a coordinated approach that supports the child's progress, wellbeing and inclusion within school life.

3.5 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)

Where a pupil has significant and complex special educational needs which cannot be met through SEN Support alone, the school, in consultation with parents/carers and external professionals, may request an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) from Hertfordshire County Council.

An EHCNA may be considered where, despite a sustained period of targeted support and intervention, a pupil:

- continues to make limited or no progress
- requires a high level of individualised and/or specialist support
- has needs that require a coordinated multi-agency response

If the Local Authority agrees to assess, it will gather information from the school, parents/carers, the pupil (where appropriate), and relevant professionals such as Educational Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists or other specialists.

Where the assessment identifies that a pupil's needs require provision beyond what is normally available in a mainstream setting, Hertfordshire County Council may issue an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The EHCP sets out:

- the pupil's special educational needs
- the outcomes sought for the pupil
- the provision required to meet those needs
- the school placement.

EHCPs are reviewed at least annually in collaboration with parents/carers, the pupil, school staff and external professionals. The review ensures that provision remains appropriate and that progress towards agreed outcomes is monitored.

The school will work closely with Hertfordshire County Council and all relevant agencies to ensure that EHCP provision is implemented effectively and that the pupil is supported to achieve the best possible outcomes in education and wider development.

3.6 FUNDING

The school receives money to support children in school with additional needs. This money is used to resource the including to enabling us to employ additional adults who can be used to support our children. This money is not 'named' for each child.

For those applying for an EHCP, funding may be considered through an Education and Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA). Children who have an EHCP will have their funding reviewed as part of their annual review. All professionals involved with the case decide the level of need, which then equates to the level of funding. The category headings start from 'universal' through 'targeted' and up to 'specialist plus' support.

For children who are not going to apply for an EHCP, 'Focused Intervention Funding' (FIF) may be considered. FIF is only for temporary funding and cannot be applied for if there is already an application to an EHCP taking place. FIF is designed to help children have short, intensive work. To apply for FIF an application has to be made, which is then discussed at a cluster of local SENCOs, before going to panel for a final decision to be made. These clusters and panels are held once per half term.

3.7 TRANSITION

All children benefit from smooth, carefully planned transitions, and this process is particularly important for pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Transition planning begins early for children who may need additional support to ensure they are well prepared for change and are able to settle successfully.

Starting at Our School

When a child joins our school, transition arrangements are put in place to ensure a positive and supportive start. Where appropriate, the SENCO will liaise with the child's previous setting, parents/carers and any external professionals to gather relevant information about needs, provision and successful strategies. This information is used to plan suitable support from the outset.

Children may be offered:

- Additional visits to the school and classroom
- Opportunities to meet key staff and build relationships
- Transition meetings with parents/carers and the SENCO
- Visual supports or social stories to prepare for starting school

Transition Between Year Groups

Once class allocations are confirmed, information is shared between staff to ensure continuity of support and effective provision. Children are given opportunities to meet their new teacher and become familiar with their new classroom and routines.

For pupils requiring additional support, enhanced transition arrangements may include:

- A postcard from the new class teacher during the summer holiday
- Opportunities for parents/carers to visit the classroom with their child before the start of the academic year

On entry to the new class, visual timetables and structured routines are used to support children in understanding expectations and settling into the school day. Key activities and support arrangements are planned in advance to ensure consistency and continuity.

Transition to Secondary School

Transition to secondary school is carefully planned for all pupils, with additional arrangements made for those with SEND where required. The SENCO and Year 6 Class Teacher works closely with secondary school staff, parents/carers and external professionals to ensure that relevant information is shared in a timely manner.

3.8 OTHER ROLES

These are the designated teachers for other roles within school are:

Children Looked After – Miss Brassington

Safeguarding – Miss Puccio

Pupil Premium – Miss Brassington

Children with Medical Needs – Miss Puccio

4 COMPLIANCE

4.1 POLICY COMPLIANCE

This policy has been written with reference to the following guidance and documents:

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools DfE (February 2013)

SEND Code of Practice 0 – 25 (January 2015)

Schools SEND Information Report Regulations (2014)

The National Curriculum in England Key Stage 1 and 2 framework document (Sept 2013)

Safeguarding Policies

Education Bill (2011)

Children's and Families Act (2014)

Statutory Guidance on Supporting Pupils at School with Medical Conditions (April 2014)

School Accessibility Plan

Teachers Standards 2012

This Policy has been drafted by the school SENCo in consultation with the SEND Governor, the SLT and the teaching staff and is reviewed annually. Parental feedback is always welcome.

As well as using the legislation and our practice as a guide, pupil progress and attainment, data, changing practice and analysis of interventions in place.

4.2 RECORD KEEPING

Records are maintained by the SENCO. They stored securely in line with the schools Information Policy.

4.3 ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Our admission arrangements are available to read through our Admission Policy.

4.4 PROCEDURE ON TRANSFER

If a child with SEND transfers to another school, complete records, including IEPs will be made available to the Headteacher and the SENCO of the new school. The SENCO will liaise with the new school to ensure the needs of the child are fully identifying and understood so the new school can arrange appropriate provision for a smooth transition.

If a child has arrived from another school, we make contact with the previous school to make sure that the best practice a child received previously is carried on when they arrive with us. We encourage parents to discuss their children with us too.

4.5 ACCESSIBILITY

The school building and grounds are specifically designed to aid access for children and adults with disabilities.

We are committed to removing barriers to learning to make the curriculum accessible to all. Please see our **Accessibility Plan** for more details. This is reviewed annually.

4.6 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Sometimes, parents may not be happy with an aspect of the provision which their child is accessing. A conversation with the class teacher is expected as the first step, and the SENCo may be consulted to attempt to resolve any issues. Then the Head Teacher may become involved, in line with the Schools Complaints Procedure. This can be found on our website.

5 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

5.1 I'M WORRIED MY CHILD ISN'T MAKING SUFFICIENT PROGRESS, WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you feel that you cannot wait until parents' evening to talk about your child's progress, start by talking to the class teacher. They will listen to your concerns and follow up at parents' evening when they have collated the evidence or book a meeting with you to discuss your concerns formally. This meeting may include the SENCo.

If your child is already on the SEN register and known to have support in school, arranging a meeting with the SENCo is also a great next step. The SENCo can be contacted directly or through the office. They will try to fit you in or book in a later time with the class teacher as well. Sometimes the Headteacher will be involved in the meeting too.

If your child has external support, it is important to maintain termly meetings to review and reflect on where progress is being made and highlight any areas of concern.

5.2 WHAT IS THE SEN REGISTER?

Children receiving additional support in school are recorded on the SEN or SEND register. This is just a way of recording who the school is supporting with additional provision. There are 3 classifications that are recorded on the SEN register – those who have had but no longer have additional support (N); those who are currently receiving additional support (K); and those who have an EHCP (E).

5.3 WHAT IF WE DON'T AGREE?

Hearing that your child may need extra support within school can be a very difficult conversation, and one that we don't begin lightly. We allow a period of observation where parents are informed what interventions are being put in place and what has been attempted before decisions are finalised. We want to work together with you to ensure your child's progress and hope that by having these conversations you will understand the procedures which we have followed to get to the point where we say your child has 'special needs'. If you do not agree, please come in and talk to us about what you think.

5.4 CAN WE, AS PARENTS, SAY 'NO' TO THE SEND LABEL?

Making the decision to say a child has 'Special Needs' is only taken when all the evidence is weighed up. Giving a child the SEND label brings in scrutiny and secures support for your child. This accountability is extremely important as it helps all our teachers know the best way to start to help your child without having a period of getting to know them. This is especially true if children move school. Although you may feel worried about the SEND label, there should be no negatives attached to agreeing your child has an educational need.

5.5 WHAT ARE 'CLASSROOM ADAPTATIONS'?

Teachers provide support in many ways to support children. Sometimes this can be a physical adaptation like where they sit and who they sit with, a slope for their desk or a fidget toy to use. Adaptations may include changes in the task, by cutting down the expectation, providing more structure or giving examples or giving more time. Sometimes an adaptation about the amount of adult support they might receive. The teacher makes decisions on what

they feel will be most successful for a child. When the classroom adaptations are not supporting progress, wave 2 (targeted support) may begin.

5.6 DOES GETTING A DIAGNOSIS OR BEING ON THE SEND REGISTER MEAN that WE HAVE TO CHANGE SCHOOL?

Children have different needs, and it is the needs of a child that makes the decision about whether they have 'Special Needs'. If your child is making progress in our school and the provision suits them, there is no need to consider a different type of educational provision. If you feel our school is not a good 'fit' for your child, you can consider a change in school.

If you have gone through a series of medical appointments to gain an Autism or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder diagnosis – or any specific need – you may want to visit schools which specialise in supporting these needs. You, as parents, have the right to choose.

5.7 WHAT IS A 'PERSON-CENTRED APPROACH'?

There is a movement in Health and Education where the opinions of those receiving the care or education are given the chance to influence the decisions around them and not be passive to what is happening. This approach is called 'person-centred' as it puts the person in the middle of all the conversations. We use many of the Helen Sanderson Associates materials to support our person-centred conversations, always talking about the needs and wants of the child.

5.8 CAN I GO DIRECTLY TO THE EXTERNAL PROFESSIONALS?

Many external services encourage you to come through school for support, but some can be accessed through Doctors or directly. If your child is pre-school age for example, you can apply for Speech therapy yourself without needing to go through school. Information about accessing services can be found through the Local Offer website, but please come to talk to us for more information.

There are also advice lines where you can access information straight from professionals. Most will give an idea of what can be expected within school and refer you to the SENCo. Please ask if you would like to call them and we can give you the details, or searching on the Local Offer Website will have information too.

5.9 Can I apply for an EHCP?

Miss Brassington is the best advisor for if your child needs an EHCP. The thresholds for gaining an EHCP has raised and it is advised that children who would be considering Specialist Provision would be more appropriate for the application, than those at a targeted level.

However, sometimes you may not agree. It is important to look at the Local Offer to the 'descriptors of need' and 'provision' to see if what you are requesting for your child or the level of need that they have would meet the criteria for an EHCP. It is also worth contacting SENDIASS – the Independent Advisory Service – funded by Hertfordshire County Council: info@hertssendiass.org.uk.

5.10 When should we consider Specialist Provision?

Children who need Specialist Provision thrive when they access it early. If you are advised that your child is showing a high level of need, look early at Specialist schools as places in Hertfordshire.