

Forest Academy



SEND information report 2019-2020

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Teaching and Learning

Inclusive classrooms

Forest Academy is an inclusive school and we endeavour to do our best for all of our children. All of our teachers are teachers of children with Special Education Needs (SEND). They all follow the school's SEND policy and know about ways in which their classroom organisation and their teaching may need to be tweaked to accommodate children with a range of SENDs.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) is the legal document which describes how schools should support children with SEND. According to that document:

A pupil has SEND where their learning difficulty or disability calls for special educational provision, namely provision different from or additional to that normally available to pupils of the same age

At Forest Academy, we also have a priority learners list. This is for children who may have a medical diagnosis or learning need that could potentially impact on their learning, however at this moment the child is not considered to have a special educational need. These children are monitored alongside our SEND pupils, half termly by the SENCOs and the senior leadership team.

Bullying of children with SEND

As a school, we have a policy of zero tolerance towards bullying of any nature (see our anti-bullying policy). We recognise that bullying of children with SEND is particularly sensitive, especially when the children are either unaware they are being bullied or they struggle to communicate their experiences. The playground and school are always supervised during playtimes and lunchtimes and members of staff, often the class teachers and members of the senior leadership team, are always available to listen and intervene where there is any suggestion of bullying. This year, the role of the school's welfare officer has expanded to support wherever necessary.

We teach children that bullying is everyone's responsibility and encourage them to come forwards if they think another child is being bullied. We will also investigate complaints of bullying from parents.

In the academic year 2019-20, we had no complaints of bullying of children with SEND.

Identifying additional and special educational needs

Initial concerns

Parents, class teachers and teaching assistants are all involved in identifying children's learning needs. All teachers regularly talk to the parents of the children they teach and keep them informed about any concerns. Concerns may also be raised at termly pupil progress meetings when teachers and senior leaders sit together and identify children whose progress is not as anticipated.

Initially, the teacher will use their knowledge of the child to change something about the child's learning opportunities in order to see whether the child begins to make better progress. Often, this will solve the problem and no further action will be required.

Some children, however, need something which is '*different from or additional to*' the opportunities offered to all children in the class. These children are often identified according to the latest Suffolk

documentation which gives clear guidance as to when children have additional needs. With their parents' permission, these children are discussed with the SENCO. If the SENCO and teacher together think there is an additional need, the parent is invited to a meeting and arrangements are made for initial, class-based, assessments. This is the first part of the Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycle, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

Next Steps

Most children on the SEND register are accommodated at 'SEN Support' (SENS). These children have targets, which are supported by their teachers to meet. The support may take the form of an intervention, additional adult support, access to assistive technology or some change to their environment. The reasonable adjustments or support is individual to the child in order to help them to meet their targets. Termly meetings are arranged by the class teacher to discuss progress with parents.

School –Based Assessments for Specific Needs

Should a further assessment be required, the school has invested in comprehensive screening tools to be carried out by our trained staff.



Where a child is over the age of 7 and has completed at least a half term in their class, we have used the online tool: **Specific Needs Assessment Profile (SNAP)**, which can screen for a wide range of developmental concerns and specific learning difficulties. SNAP has been used successfully this year to uncover specific barriers to learning. The tool has been instrumental in combining the views of the child, family and the class teacher, as requested by the SEND Code of Practice.

The tool produces a thorough School and Home Report, which offer further explanations about the difficulties identified with recommendations for interventions and ways to support for both the classroom and at home.

This year 25 children between the ages of 7 and 11 have been assessed using this tool. 20 children had special educational needs identified. Of those, 13 uncovered traits of a Specific Learning Difficulty (dyslexia/dyscalculia), 3 were referred and accepted by paediatrics for traits of ADHD, 2 were referred and accepted on to the occupational therapy team for traits of dyspraxia, 1 seen by the sensory and communication service and a final child referred and accepted on to the speech and language therapy service.

In the academic year 2020-21, the school has chosen to continue to reinvest in the tool and continue to use SNAP in identifying additional and special educational needs.

For the academic year 2019-20, Suffolk County Council allocated a portion of a grant to funding **Language Link** for all schools. Forest Academy used this to assess all children in Reception, Year 1 and vulnerable children in Year 2 for potential Language difficulties. We then put in place any recommendations the programme made. The outcomes were:

Reception: 57 children were assessed and 38 children were found to be 'clear', meaning the remaining 33.3% of children in reception were found to have a language need. 8 children were identified as needing intervention from a speech and language therapist, 5 of which were already on the service and the remaining 3 referred and accepted on to the service.

11 children were identified as needing support in class. These 11 children were re-assessed at a later stage to find that 7 had overcome their barrier to language, 1 has been referred to the child development centre for wider concerns, 1 child closely monitored for a potential learning difficulty and the final 2 continue to receive support for having English as an additional language (Band A and Band B).

Year 1: 60 children assessed and 52 children were found to be 'clear'. Of those children identified as needing support, 3 children were already receiving support from the speech and language therapy service. A fourth child was referred and accepted on to the speech and language therapy service. Two more children received in class support as recommended by the programme. The final two identified were children new to English (Proficiency Band A) and received appropriate English as an additional language support in class.

Year 2: 19 vulnerable children assessed and 14 were found to be 'clear'. One child was identified as needing support from a speech and language therapist, for whom consultations took place in the March of 2020 prior to lockdown, he is known to the service and awaiting support. 4 children were identified as needing support in class. 1 child holds an EHCP for speech language and communication needs (SLCN) and at a later date was discharged from the service having made excellent progress. The second child was already under the speech and language therapy service and was discharged at a later date for making excellent progress. The third child was found to have a hearing difficulty and the final child has been referred for further investigations in to complex learning difficulties.

In the academic year 2020-21, the school will continue to fund the use of Language Link. This will be for the screening of all children in reception, re-assessments of children already identified and use of the extensive intervention programmes that are generated for each child necessary. Staff training has been booked to enable more staff to carry out the assessments and action recommended interventions.

Specialised Assessments

Where school-based assessments have uncovered difficulties that may have a long-term impact, we will refer to external agencies with the necessary qualifications to perform specialist, diagnostic assessments or action plans. At Forest Academy, a diagnosis is not necessary to unlock the support that a child may need. Outreach services do not require a diagnosis to secure a successful referral. A diagnosis is not necessary to apply for special arrangements for a child who is to participate in standardised tests such as SATs.

Our SENCOs will talk through all next steps with parents/carers and the child (where appropriate), inclusive of the personal, family choice as to whether or not to pursue a potential diagnosis.



Where a child presents with traits of dyslexia, dyscalculia or visual stress, we may refer through to the Indigo Dyslexia Centre. This year we have made recommendations to multiple families, three of which have then received formal diagnoses of dyslexia.

Where a child presents with visual stress, we make recommendations for children to undergo an eye test and potentially a visual stress test at their chosen opticians. This academic year, 3 children have been diagnosed as experiencing visual stress at their opticians, with reasonable adjustments made with overlays, appropriate coloured paper and tinted exercise books.



In a very small number of cases, where all other avenues have been explored, the school consults with the Psychology and Therapeutic Services to secure advice from an Educational Psychologist.

Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment

A very small number of children will be referred for assessment for an Educational, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Children with EHCPs have a record of support and a termly Individual Support Plan meeting to discuss progress in the same way as children on SENS.

More information on SENS and EHCPs for parents can be found at:



In the academic year 2019-20, the two SENCOs placed 6 referrals for an EHCP. 2 now have finalised EHCPs in place, 3 are currently undergoing EHC Needs Assessments and a final one was declined, with advice to reapply following given actions in the next academic year.

Profile of SEND 2019-2020

SEND List 2019/20

For the academic year 2019/20, Forest Academy generated a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) List to account for all the children within the school categorised as SEN Support (K) or in possession of an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). 66 children were on SEND list, equating to **17.2%** of the school population from Reception to Year 6 (383 on role). This is a significant increase on the 11.3% from the academic year 2018-2019 and a direct result of the drive on identification within the school and increased consultations with external agencies.



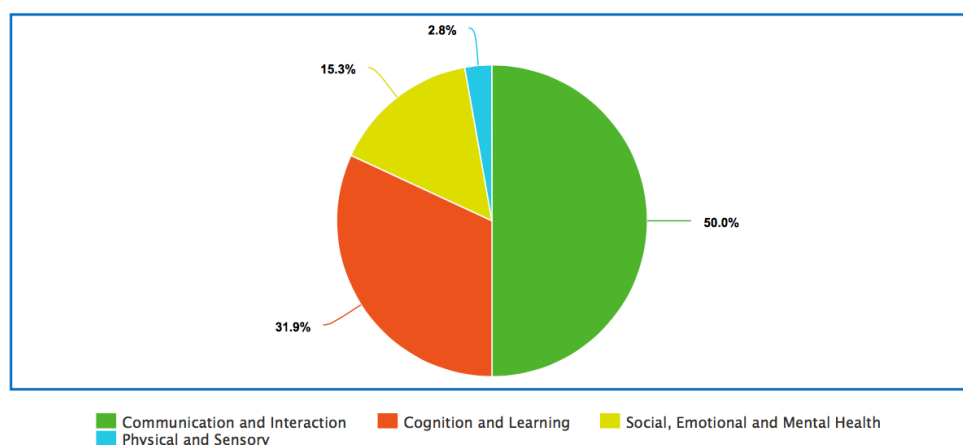
17.2% of all pupils is **above the national average of 15.5%**, as set out in the government's national statistics.

Of these children, **11 held an EHCP** with three referrals pending at the close of the year. This equates to **2.9%** of the school's population, which is **below the national average of 3.3%**. This is an increase of two EHCPs on the previous year. We anticipate this to increase in the academic year 2020-21 with further strong referrals proposed.

The children with identified SEND fall within one or more of the **four broad areas** of need as outlined by SEND Code of Practice (DFE January 2015).

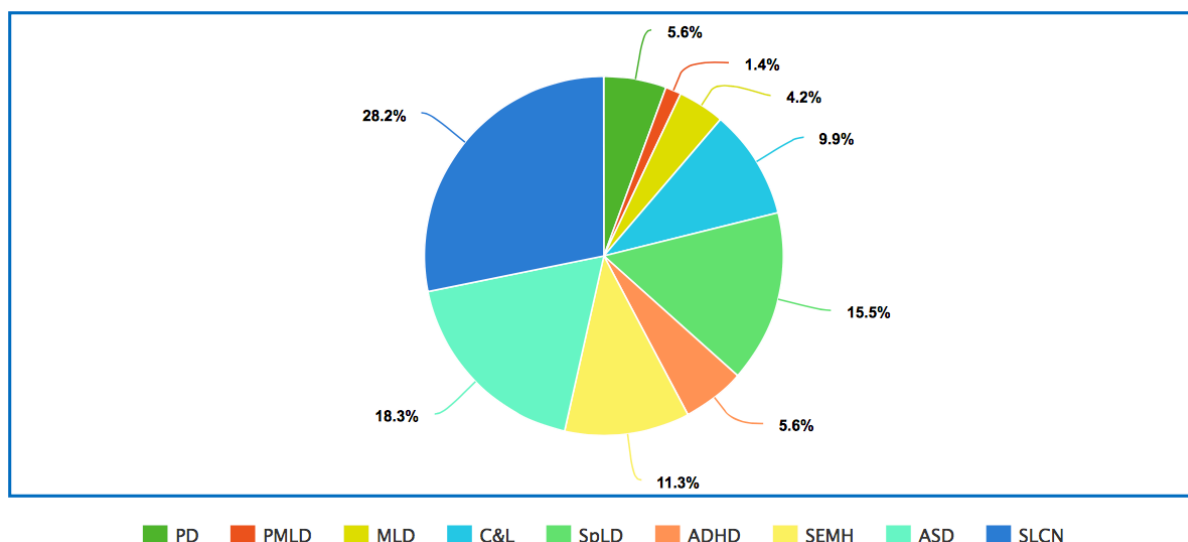
- **Communication and interaction**
These can include: Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- **Cognition and learning**
These can include: Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) such as Dyslexia, Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia, Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD), Severe Learning Difficulty (SLD) and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty (PMLD).
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health**
These can include: Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Mental Health disorders such as anxiety or depression.
- **Sensory and/or Physical Needs**
These can include: Visual Impairment (VI), Hearing Impairment (HI), Multiple Sensory Impairment (MSI) and Physical Disability (PD).

Below is a chart demonstrating percentage of the broad areas of need at Forest Academy 2019-2020



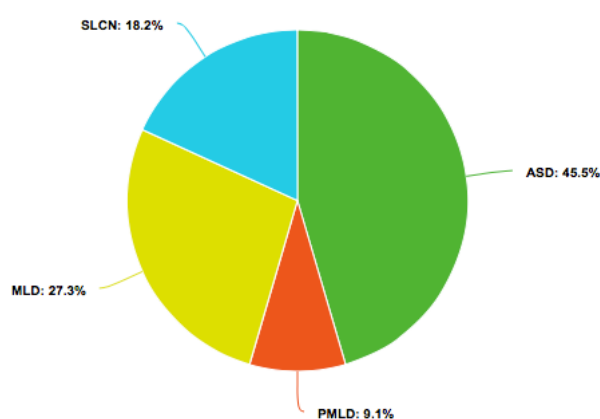
At Forest Academy, it is clear that a significant proportion of children with SEND have barriers relating to communication and interaction (50%). Further analysis breaks down the nature of their need in to more specific fields.

Primary Need of SEN Support and EHCP (%) 2019-20



This academic year, Speech Language and Communication Needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder continue to dominate the SEND profile within the school. SEN expenditure this year has been partly allocated to the delivering carry over work for NHS SALT written intervention programmes; the production of visual support resources and purchasing Makaton books with videos and training. We have also had select members of staff trained in how to use PECS. Expenditure has also been partly invested in the County Inclusive Support Services (CISS) Annual Package, who conduct observations and make recommendations for children with ASD or presenting with SEMH difficulties.

% of Children with an EHCP at Forest Academy 2019/20



Of the 11 children in possession of an EHCP, there has been a mixture of complex to severe needs. This includes 1 child with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and 3 children with Moderate Learning Difficulties. Of these four children with severe needs, we were able to secure two specialist provision placements, beginning in the next academic year.

Children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Condition account for 45% of EHCPs. This is **above the national average of 30%** and continues to demonstrate a very high profile of autism within the school when compared to the national average.

Working with children who are looked after by the local authority

In 2019-2020, we had one child on our SEND register. This child has access to the same processes and support as all other children.

Adaptations to the curriculum

Children with SEND need provision which is different from and additional to their peers. Most of this provision is through the class teacher planning different work for the child. This is known as differentiation. Differentiation can refer to allowing access to additional resources, doing different activities or doing the same activity as others but with additional support. All teachers plan in this way for the whole class and consider the needs of their SEND pupils when identifying the best pathways through learning.

In addition, whole school strategic planning supports children with SEND. This is laid out in more detail in the school's accessibility plan.

Looking after children's social and emotional well-being

We recognise children's mental health and emotional states impact significantly on their ability to concentrate and make progress in school. Social and emotional difficulties are often communicated through angry, aggressive, hard to manage behaviours; through self-harming or through withdrawn, introverted behaviours.

All teachers are very aware of the social and emotional needs of the children in their classes and accommodate individual needs. This might be by having additional access to the teacher or a familiar teaching assistant, through a social skills intervention such as Lego Therapy, through individual reward systems, meet and greet, break cards or another intervention that meets the child's individual needs.

The school has invested in creating two Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, who can be referred to at any point of the year by the child's class teacher. They cover a range of interventions that can be delivered in a group basis or an individual basis, depending on the desired outcomes for the child.



Should a child need more specialised support in managing their emotional wellbeing and mental health, a referral can be placed through to the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Hub. This is done jointly with parents if appropriate. This academic year we have supported 4 families with accessing this service.



Should we need more support with strategies to use in school, we engage outside services such as County Inclusive Support Services (CISS) and apply for acceptance on to their core offer for children at risk of exclusion or school refusal. This year we have had 9 children supported through the core caseload with ASD, ADHD & SEMH.

Evaluating the effectiveness of our work with children

All of the work we do with our children is carefully monitored. Overall progress is discussed at half termly pupil progress meetings and any causes for concern are highlighted.

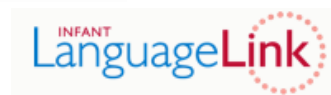
Interventions and programmes purchased and deployed by the school are evidence-based.



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All staff are asked to complete intervention monitoring sheets, which record the progress made by individual pupils, the effectiveness of the intervention and the impact of the adult delivering. Thus allowing us to decide whether the intervention is effective or not. Ineffective interventions are stopped or are altered so that they become effective.

Progress for children with SEND is measured against three personalised targets set each half term as a part of their individual support plans. Both SENCOs review the progress against these targets half termly. The senior leadership team review the progress against these targets on a termly basis through pupil progress meetings with the class teacher. Overall, children with SEND made progress against their personalised targets, with the potential to achieve up to 18 targets in an academic year.

Access to extra-curricular activities

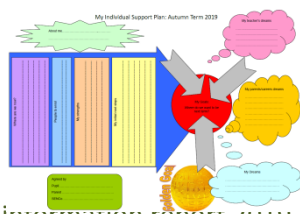
The school offered a range of extra-curricular activities, both during and after school. Children on the SEND register were actively encouraged to attend clubs, which enable them to learn new skills and to develop confidence. We are pleased at the number of children who participated in extra-curricular activities. Teachers are asked to complete half termly tracking of the extra curricular activities that children participate in to ensure that they are encouraged at every opportunity. With the measures necessary during the COVID-19 lockdown and subsequent social distancing, all but home learning clubs have been suspended until safe to resume, in line with government guidance.

Working with Children and Parents

The school operates a Person-Centred approach to involving children in their education. All children on the SEND register, and any other child that it is felt appropriate, complete a One Page Profile at least annually, which enables them to record information about what is important to them, how best to support them and the views of all adults (inclusive of parents) who work with them.



Some children may establish three Relevant and Time-



also have an individual support plan, which will SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Based) targets to focus on desired outcomes for

the term. The ISP is updated half-termly in a meeting with the parents, class teacher and child if appropriate. At the meeting, the child's progress towards their targets is discussed and necessary support identified.

In addition, parents are invited to share their views on the school's provision via an annual questionnaire and some face to face meetings where invited.

Working with Children

All children in the school, including those with SEND, have targets which they work towards and the school feedback policy explains how teachers give children feedback to help them to move towards their targets.

All children including those with SEND are regularly invited to complete a short 'What I feel' questionnaire in order to capture a snapshot of children's views about learning, friendships, opportunities to access extra-curricular activities and their feelings of being safe in school. These are collated and considered, alongside the parent questionnaires, when we draw up the next SEND action plan.

As part of their one page profile and their individual support plan, children are asked to think about their futures, although we know these are likely to change. We want all of our children to have high aspirations and to plan for possible futures. If we know about children's hopes and dreams, we can sometimes direct them towards local opportunities for developing their skills and interests.

Reasonable adjustments are made for all children on the SEND register where possible. In some cases other policies including our behavior policy and SEND policy may be followed to ensure that all children in school are being supported.

Working with Families

Working with families this year has proved a significant challenge, given the worldwide coronavirus pandemic. Practice up until this point included working closely with families, holding regular meetings to ensure that we are giving the whole family the best support we can. Where needed, we may call upon our safeguarding and welfare officer for support or other outside agencies.

SEND administration

Transition arrangements

Transition into our school, from our school, and from class to class is given careful and individual consideration. Most children manage their transitions well as part of the whole class transition arrangements. However, we need to do additional planning and preparation for some of our children who become anxious when faced by change. This might include additional visits, taking photographs, doing work about what they can look forward to in the new class or school, addressing concerns etc.

Involving outside agencies

Outside agencies the school worked with during the year were mostly from Suffolk County Council or the local health authority: Educational Psychologists, County Inclusive Support Services, ADHD Service, Special Educational Needs and Disability Access Trust, NHS speech and language therapists, Dyslexia Outreach Team, paediatric diabetes specialists, paediatric epilepsy specialists, school nursing service and occupational therapists. In consultation with parents we would refer to outside agencies where it was felt appropriate.

The school is a member of the Mildenhall SEN hub which is a collaboration of 10 local primary schools working together to support children with SEND. We benefit from sharing information and resources, networking meetings, annual conferences and the support of the Hub coordinator.

This academic year has seen the necessity of consulting with specialist provision, alternative provision and pupil referral units. We have been successful in securing two places at special provision and one place at a pupil referral unit. We have also liaised with other alternative provision sites such as those delivered through the Green Light Trust.

Training and expertise of staff

All of our teachers are teachers of children with SEND and have a broad understanding of the needs of children with SEND.

Specifically, the school has:

- Two qualified SENCOs and a further colleague completing the SENCO award at a distance in the next academic year due to COVID-19 interruptions to studies.
- Two Emotional Literacy Support Assistants
- Two Lego therapy assistants
- Five teachers trained in the delivery of Forest Schools at our on-site 'Forest School'
- One class teacher with a degree in Speech and Language Therapy
- One teaching assistant with a Masters in Occupational Therapy
- School wide Elklan certification for supporting speech and language
- Appropriate staff trained in behaviour and the law and physical de-escalation to match individual children with risk assessments for difficult and dangerous behaviour.
- 16 members of staff across EYFS and KS1 for Makaton Signing
- Two members of staff trained in Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

All of the staff have been provided with information regarding a wide range of SENDs and how they can adapt their teaching to support these. Staff receive training that is appropriate to their role in school. This may be delivered by staff in school or by other agencies.

Both SENCOs provide additional information and support to enhance teachers' knowledge and expertise. In addition, staff have access to a library of information books and, where applicable, teachers are directed to websites which are particularly useful for information about different SENDs. If necessary, we can call on additional services to support our work with the children.

Funding

Forest Academy receives funding from the Department for Education, some of which is intended to support children with SEND. For children who have particularly high levels of need and support, we apply for top-up funding (High Needs Funding) from Suffolk. In 2019-2020 we were successful in **securing approximately £80,000**, up significantly on the amount for the previous year (£39000).

This is monitored closely against the SEND register, knowing precisely how much is allocated to each child and how it is spent.

Suffolk County Council announced that 62% of applications in the autumn term 2019 High Needs Funding submissions were successful in securing the desired 'Band' for their child. Specifically at Forest Academy, we had a **success rate of 87.5%**, with further successes in the spring and summer submissions.

We also received funding for a pupil who holds a dual placement at Riverwalk. This was used to provide 1:1 support and specific resources.

This money, along with a portion of Pupil Premium funding, has largely been invested in additional adults for classrooms with the highest need. It has also funded a significant programme of CPD, investment in 10 SEND laptops, additional iPads, software licenses, screening tool licenses, additional equipment for the classroom and the furnishing of a nurture room ready for the academic year 2020-21.

Measures Taken During COVID-19

For the duration of the Lockdown period, March-July, Forest Academy remained open to all children with an EHCP, as required by the government. Of the 10 families of children with EHCPs, 4 chose to send their children to school. Of the 6 families that chose to remain in the safety of their home, 3 were deemed clinically vulnerable and were therefore shielding. A further 15 children from the SEND register without an EHCP were offered a place during the lockdown measures. 10 children accepted these places.

Children that remained at home, both with and without EHCPs on the SEND register, were provided with:

- Weekly welfare calls from the class teacher, welfare officer, a SENCO or a headteacher.
- Access to online learning through Purple Mash, Lexia, Times Tables Rockstars, Mathletics and MyMaths.
- Extensive use of Tapestry for children in EYFS to share activities completed at home.
- Access to daily videos, recorded by one of the SENCo, posted on her YouTube Channel 'Miss Edmeades Supporting SEN'.
- Access to weekly paper packs, that could be submitted for marking and written feedback
- Support to liaise with specialist services during lockdown through the organising of Virtual meetings with CISS, Speech and Language Therapists, SENDAT Outreach, Dyslexia Outreach, Early Help and Family Services where securing specialist provision, alternative provision and performing EHC Needs Assessments virtually.

In anticipation of the significant disruption to education that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage will have experienced, a robust plan and structure has been put in place to help them transition successfully in to Year 1, despite having missed a significant stage in their education. Changes to room allocations were made so that the 60 children transitioning from EYFS in to Year 1 will occupy the entirety of the Key Stage 1 Wild Flower building. This allowed for splitting the 2020/21 cohort of 60 Year 1 pupils in to three classes of 20, each with three adults. The fourth room has been converted in to a nurture/catch up room. Therefore, the academic year 2020-21 will have a Year 1 cohort of 60 spread across three classrooms, with 9 adults and a nurture room. As opposed to the usual 60 across two rooms staffed by 4 adults.

Supporting families with initial concerns

Where a family has a concern around their child's progress or wellbeing at school, the school's **SEND policy** outlines the first steps they can take to raise these concerns. This is easily accessed on the school's website and freely available to view.

Strategic management

Below is a list of people in the school who are particularly concerned with the organisation of SEND in the school. They can all be contacted via the school office:

SEND governor- Lisa Bird

SENCO: Zoe Huff

SENCO: Claire Edmeades

Head teachers: April Grimes and Lorna Rourke

The way in which we identify and work with our SEND children is clearly explained in our SEND policy.

Complaints Policy

We work hard to support all of our children, but sometimes parents have concerns which they don't feel are addressed. If you have any complaints, please follow the complaints policy as outlined on our website, but can be summarised as follows:

Step 1: informal discussion with class teacher

Step 2: informal meeting with head teacher

Step 3: formal written complaint to head teacher

Step 4: referral to governing body or the local authority