

# **Report to the Governing Body of Charlesworth Voluntary Controlled Primary School in respect of Children on the Inclusion Register – November 2020**

**Author: Dorothy Phillips – Governor with delegated link responsibility for the above**

## **Introduction**

My very grateful thanks to Miss Kathryn Barton – the SENCO with lead responsibility for ‘Children on the Inclusion Register’- for meeting with me to review the systems and processes employed within Charlesworth School which support the health and learning of those children included on this Register and for providing much of the hard data contained within this report.

The Inclusion Register lists children who require extra school support and includes children who are ‘Gifted and Talented’; those meeting the criteria for Pupil Premium; those meeting the criteria for Pupil Premium Plus; those deemed ‘Vulnerable’ including those children who are fostered and adopted from care; children with medical needs; children with ongoing absence or persistent lateness issues as well as those who fall within the SEN criteria for extra funding.

## **Attachment Awareness – a whole school therapeutic approach**

Charlesworth Primary School has a 3 tiered therapeutic process throughout the school.

Tier 1 is entitled ‘Our Time’ and is a whole school purposeful play system and children are assessed using the ‘Leuven Scale’. Children with more specific needs thus identified, may then move to Tier 2 or Tier 3.

Tier 2 is entitled ‘My Time’ which encompasses and reinforces the existing ‘Positive Play’ system. The effectiveness of the interventions is assessed using the ‘Boxall Profile’.

Tier 3 is entitled ‘Me Time’. This targets specific individuals who require more in-depth therapeutic support through the assistance of trained therapeutic support workers. They experience a 6-week programme of intervention which also has an in-built assessment scale.

Children may transfer up and down the Tiers as their circumstances change and life events affect their learning ability. As all children fall within this ‘whole school’ approach, no child is made to ‘feel adversely different’.

## **Legal Responsibilities:**

-It is the statutory responsibility of Schools to maintain an up-to-date register of children with Special Educational Needs, that is, those children needing above and beyond normal teaching input.

-The Children and Families Act 2014, the definition of ‘Special Education Needs’ or SEN was broadened. Originally, a child had SEN if he or she had a learning difficulty which called for special educational provision (SEP) to be made for them. Now, a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. Not all children with a disability are considered to have SEN.

All educational institutions are required to use their ‘best endeavours’ to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged by their SEN or disability. They are required to adopt a graduated approach to education, implementing an ‘assess, plan, do, review’ cycle to monitor pupils’ development. If it becomes apparent that an individual is not making the expected progress, then an institution may make educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, that for others of the same age.

There are several ways that this can be achieved. Where necessary this can include bringing in external help, for example by having an outside therapist come into the school on particular days to work with an individual. It does not necessarily mean that extra funding is required to meet the child’s needs.

However, when a child has very complex needs, extra funding is available via an application and assessment process.

-Children falling within a definition of ‘Looked After Children’ are children who are currently in the care of a Local Authority who are living in either a Children’s Home or with Foster Carers and also children who have been adopted direct from the care of a Local Authority. It has been well researched that many such children do not achieve their maximum educational potential due mainly to the emotional trauma of the circumstances that led to the need for them to be taken into statutory care. In recognition of this,

the Government provides schools with extra money specifically meant to be targeted to provide facilities which will benefit those children, to help them to maximise their learning. Currently 2 children fall within this definition.

### **Funding available by application in respect of SEN**

There are 3 funding streams:

**Temporary Additional Pupil Support (TAPS)** TAPS was established to enable the provision of short-term support for pupils at risk of exclusion to be provided. Its normal duration is for 2 terms.

**Graduated Response for Individual Pupil (GRIP).** This allows schools to access higher level need funding for a year (with the option after each annual review, to request continued funding for the forthcoming year) without the necessity to request an Education Health and Care Plan This is for pupils with significant barriers to learning.

GRIP gives pupils access to specialist services, as appropriate, such as Support Service for Special Educational Needs (SSSEN) at this earlier stage and gives schools the earlier opportunity to reduce barriers to learning for pupils. If an application is successful, schools will receive GRIP funding straight away, without the 20-week assessment period for an education, health and care needs assessment (EHCNA).

Schools can submit documentation directly to show that a pupil's needs and barriers to learning require additional funding, above the resources normally available to them.

The GRIP funding will give schools and parents and carers the opportunity to be more flexible in how pupil support is best delivered, and a range of interventions can be considered. Parents and carers must be fully involved and agree the GRIP Plan in partnership with school.

### **EHCP Funding**

The Local Authority will fund a package of support for a child, as necessary, up to and including one-to-one support to cover all the taught hours in a school week.

### **Monies received**

The school is expected to spend £6000 per appropriate child from a nominal SEN budget before applying for additional monies from one of the above streams. The school has to evidence that it is fully spending this money as part of the County Council's SEN application process. Last year the school's total nominal budget was set at £37,896 which was fully utilised on Teaching Assistant support for those children on the SEN Register. This money is ring-fenced and cannot be used to cover any general Budget deficit. The total amount of additional money from the Local Authority this year amounts to £14,592. In reality, the actual amount necessary to be spent on Teaching Assistants is £100,682.

In addition, the school also receives ring-fenced Pupil Premium monies of approximately £25,000 which has to be spent on extra provision for pupils identified as meeting the criteria, to ensure that due to their circumstances, they do not fall behind their peers in achieving their educational targets. This is currently spent on learning intervention support including the employment of the outdoor wildlife learning activity Teaching Assistant.

### **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator Role (SENCO)**

In accordance with statutory requirements the school has designated a specific teacher to undertake the above role. She currently has half a day a week dedicated time free from teaching responsibilities, to undertake the requirements of this role. With such high numbers of children with SEN, the amount of work engendered by the need to support and service the statutory requirements, processes and procedures in respect of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in applying for funding, completing support plans, arranging and chairing support planning meetings with parents and professionals, assessing children, offering support to other staff, individual children and parents, is enormous and much of it has to be completed in the SENCO's own time. The current SENCO has been placed on the UPS3 salary scale in recognition of this.

## **Current situation:**

### **1. EDUCATION, HEALTH and CARE PLAN (EHCP) - 2 children are currently listed.**

If a child or young person needs more support than can be provided within a school's own resources, either the young person, parents or the school itself can request that the Local Authority conduct an 'EHC Needs Assessment' of their SEN for the purpose of producing an Education, Health and Care Plan. An EHC plan is a legal document that describes the child or young person's special educational needs and associated health and social care needs and sets out the provision and support they must receive. An EHC Plan will also outline the child or young person's goals and ambitions in life (as appropriate) and describe the outcomes sought for the child or young person.

Only a small percentage of children with SEN have EHC Plans. About 20% of all children in schools are said to have SEN whereas only 2-3% of all children have an /EHC plan. An EHC plan is only issued if the child's needs cannot be met within the resources normally available to mainstream schools in the area and if the school cannot reasonably be expected to provide the support identified. The vast majority of children with SEN will have their needs met at the school-based levels of support (SEN Support through the "cycle of action").

### **2. GRADUATED RESPONSE for INDIVIDUAL PUPIL (GRIP) - 1 application currently being progressed**

### **3. SEN SUPPORT - 5 children are listed.**

This is support which utilises the school's own resources to provide the specific inputs required for the child to maximise its potential. This may include bringing in Health workers to school like speech and language therapists on a regular basis to assist the child. All 5 children will require a MY SEND Learning Plan to be completed detailing all the issues and requirements. This is a statutory obligation, and each Plan takes at least 3 hours to complete.

Where a pupil is receiving 'SEN support', schools should talk to parents regularly to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them, discuss the activities and support that will help achieve them, and identify the responsibilities of the parent, the pupil and the school. Schools should meet parents at least three times each year. These discussions should be led by a teacher with good knowledge and understanding of the pupil who is aware of their needs and attainment. It should provide an opportunity for the parent to share their concerns and, together with the teacher, agree their aspirations for the pupil. The views of the pupil should be included in these discussions.

A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion should be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff. This record should also be given to the pupil's parents. It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

In addition to the above, three other groups of children are required to be identified and assisted but not officially listed on the SEN register.

### **1. QUALITY FIRST MONITORING (School Support) - 13 children listed**

Quality First was introduced as a toolkit to assist teachers to identify innovative and appropriate individualised ways of assisting children to learn. It is very useful in planning appropriate support and interventions for children who are exhibiting some difficulties but do not meet the criteria for SEN Support or EHCP funding. The extra support to assist learning takes place within the school setting by school staff. This group includes some children in the Reception Class who will be placed on the official SEN Register next year. Children in the Reception Class cannot legally be newly placed on the SEN Register as it is recognised that factors such as settling into a school environment may affect their ability to learn and it also takes 12 months to gather sufficient evidence to support and justify SEN status. However, one child in Reception came with an EHCP already assessed through the Nursery EHCP application process. Unfortunately, the DCC have yet to transfer the money into the school budget.

**2. GIFTED and TALENTED** -- 1 child listed.

'Gifted and talented' describes children who have the potential to develop significantly beyond what is expected for their age. 'Gifted' refers to a child who has abilities in one or more **academic** subjects, such as English or maths.

'Talented' refers to a child who has skills in a **practical** area such as music, sport or art. Often these children are overlooked and therefore have 'underachieved' during their school career as they have not been sufficiently stretched to maximise their potential. They may need extra support to move ahead of their peers in respect of the set curriculum.

**3. VULNERABLE CHILDREN** - 21 children listed

These are children whose general social circumstances have affected or may affect their ability to learn effectively in either the short, medium or long term. This group includes children who are fostered or have been adopted from care – who are specifically entitled to Pupil Premium Plus monies to assist them.

**3. PUPIL PREMIUM** - 18 children listed

**4. PUPIL PREMIUM PLUS** - 2 children listed

**5. PERSISTENT LATENESS or ABSENCE** - 2 children listed. These children are being dealt with under the Absence Policy which has been appropriately applied and is reviewed regularly. The Chair of Governors, Head Teacher and School Administrator meet each term to review the absence figures and the actions taken and/or required.

**7. CHILDREN with MEDICAL NEEDS** – 12 children listed.

These children have diagnosed chronic medical conditions which are wide --ranging in their levels of severity and distress. This represents approximately 12% of the pupils.

It is recognised nationally and locally that some children with medical needs may need support whilst in school in dealing with their health conditions and/or extra assistance to maintain adequate educational input due to the effect of the medical conditions and/or absence caused by ill-health or frequent medical appointments/interventions. Individual health and safety risk assessments in respect of the requirements of each child with medical needs are undertaken in order to determine how best to assist a child, the level of support which it is safe for staff to provide and the manner in which it is to be administered.

Parents/carers are requested to provide the school with details of any chronic health problems suffered by their child. However, some parents/carers do not always provide that information and it is only gleaned through informal conversation with the child and/or parent/carer or when staff have to deal with a 'medical situation' about which they have no recorded information.

I am satisfied that the school has detailed and appropriate risk assessments and procedures in place to deal with medical issues and the Policy is regularly reviewed by Governors.

**Specific breakdown of numbers in each year on the Register**

Reception Class	- 15 on roll	- 2 on Register
Year 1	- 15 on roll	- 7 on Register (there are also 5 children who have Speech and Language needs within the Foundation classes but fall below the level for referral to the SALT Team)
Year 2	- 19 on roll	- 6 on Register
Year 3	- 14 on roll	- 8 on Register
Year 4	- 16 on roll	- 5 on Register
Year 5	- 10 on roll	- 3 on Register
Year 6	- 9 on roll	- 0 on Register

**Conclusion:**

In total, currently 40 individual children are deemed to require some form of additional learning support, representing approximately 40% of the children on the school rota of 99 children.

All children on the Register are currently well supported by staff and every effort is made to enable them to develop socially and emotionally as well as maximising their learning potential. I am completely satisfied that the school is meeting all its statutory requirements in respect of all the needs of the children on the Inclusion Register and that its assessment processes are robust and appropriately applied to identify all children who may have additional needs.

However, I have concerns that the DCC department dealing with SEN is failing to deal with applications for extra funding in a speedy manner which is having a detrimental effect on the school budget as the school desperately attempts to meet the children's needs from its own base budget. The DCC department is also behind in carrying out the statutory reviews (despite many requests from the school to do so) in respect of one child who has an EHCP and is thus also putting the school at risk of not fulfilling its full obligations.

**Recommendations**

- School staff should be commended for their dedication to all the above children which often goes above and beyond the expectations of their roles and employment requirements
- The SENCO be commended for her excellent work and dedication to her role
- That the Governing Body send a letter to the DCC expressing their concern at the delays both in carrying out reviews and in transferring monies in respect of the child in Reception who has an existing EHCP.

**I respectfully request that this report be accepted by the Governing Body.**