



Frequently Asked Questions by Families of Children with Special Educational Needs (SEND)

What is 'SEND'?

'SEND' stands for 'Special Educational Needs or Disabilities'. SEND provision is 'educational support that is additional to or different from that made for others of the same age [...] It is provision that goes beyond the differentiated approaches and learning arrangements normally provided as part of high quality, personalised teaching.' (SEN Code of Practice, 2014)

Who decides whether my child requires additional support?

A child may be identified as requiring additional support from 'key person' observations, follow-up assessments by staff or through parental concerns. If you feel that your child requires additional support, please talk to your child's 'key person' in the first instance. If you have further questions, please get in touch with Jan Stillaway, our SEND co-ordinator, through the office: 020 7520 0385 or admin@thomascoram.camden.sch.uk

What extra support might my child get if they have SEND?

Most children with SEND are supported within the nursery environment by high quality, differentiated teaching from our experienced staff. Some children benefit from participating in specialist activities according to their individual learning needs. A few children may need individual (1:1) adult support to help them access learning opportunities at the nursery.

Do I have to pay for SEND support?

No. If your child has more complex needs and would benefit from additional adult support for part of their day, we may discuss applying for additional funding once your child has settled into nursery.

What happens if my child already has specialist support?

If your child already has specialist support, such as a speech and language therapist or multi-disciplinary provision, we will seek your permission to liaise with individuals or agencies. We often work collaboratively with outside professionals and value their expert input in assessing progress, and ensuring educational plans continue to meet each child's developing needs.

Can you cater for children with complex SEND needs?

Yes. As long as we have a free space, all children are welcome at nursery. Children with SEND are sometimes given priority for a place in nursery, depending on circumstances. If your child has very complex medical or learning needs, we may need to plan how we will tailor our provision to meet their needs before they start and they may need a longer settling in period. Situated on the ground floor without internal steps or stairs leading in or out, the nursery is wheelchair accessible. We also have a wheelchair-accessible toilet.

How is my child's support monitored and reviewed?

Following assessment by staff, parents and (if required) external agencies, we put in place an Individual Education Plan (IEP) which summarises next steps and / or strategies to support your child's learning. The IEP, which may be short- or long-term in scope, is regularly reviewed by your child's 'key person' and SENDCo in collaboration with parents.

What if my child needs further or specialist support?

Sometimes even a child who has received support tailored to their individual needs may need further or specialist support. If so, parents and staff may decide to apply for an 'Education Health Care Plan'. Once accepted, the EHCP will provide additional (funded) support to your child as they begin primary school. The plan is reviewed annually.

How do I get involved with my child's education?

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in your child's education such as sharing information with us when your child is settling in, contributing to the planning of support and assessment of your child's progress with staff, joining in with nursery activities and events - or even becoming a parent governor! When we make Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for children, they always include what families can do at home as well as what we will do at school so we can work together. We want families to be involved in all aspects of their child's education.

What if my child won't eat nursery food?

We recognise that some children with SEND are very sensitive about eating and / or drinking. If your child won't eat nursery food, we will make arrangements, in consultation with you, to address their individual needs. We don't allow packed lunches, but we do make adaptations to our menu if required. Sometimes snacks can help children get used to eating during the day: parents are encouraged to bring healthy snacks (fruit, vegetables, rice cakes or similar) to share with their peers.

Does my child need to be toilet-trained to come to nursery?

No. If your child isn't toilet-trained yet we will discuss this with you once they have settled in. When the time feels right, we will work with you to help them learn to use the toilet independently, but we know that some children with SEND will need longer to learn this and may not be ready yet. We have comfortable, clean changing areas for children within the learning suites, and all our staff are experienced in nappy changing.

What happens when my child goes to primary school?

In a child's final academic year before they attend primary school, we are on hand to advise parents how to apply for primary school. We work closely with families and schools to arrange smooth transitions. This might include sharing information and arranging meetings with your child's new setting to ensure that their needs are met as soon as they start at their new school.

Can you recommend other sources of support and information about SEND?

Yes. Every council is required to publish a 'Local Offer', detailing support available for children with SEND, and their families. Camden's 'Local Offer' is available on its website. In addition, the following organisations are recommended in the 'Ask, Listen, Do' leaflet produced by NHS England:

Contact	www.contact.org.uk
National Deaf Children's Society	www.ndcs.org.uk
National Autistic Society	www.autism.org.uk
Ambitious about Autism	www.ambitiousaboutautism.org.uk
Cerebra	www.cerebra.org.uk
Together for Short Lives	www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk
Mencap	www.mencap.org.uk
Challenging Behaviour Foundation	www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk
Bringing Us Together	www.bringingustogether.org.uk
Healthwatch	www.healthwatch.co.uk
Citizens' Advice	www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Our SEND policy and SEND information report are available on the website in the 'About Us' section. If you have any questions about SEND provision at Thomas Coram, please get in touch via the school office: 020 7520 0385 or admin@thomascoram.camden.sch.uk