

Special Educational Needs Policy

Revised November 2010

Translation advice

If you have difficulty understanding this booklet please visit the Education and Children's Services Reception at the address below where we can arrange a telephone interpreting service.

'Keshille per perkthim: Nese keni veshtersi te kuptoni kete botim, ju lutemi vizitoni recepcionin e edukimit (Reception), ku mund te organizojme perkthim nepermes telefonit'

Albanian

"مشورة الترجمة: إذا كانت لديكم أية صعوبة في فهم هذا المنشور. فنرجو زيارة استقبال التعليم، حيث بإمكاننا أن نرتب ترجمة شفوية بالهاتف."

Arabic

'অনুবাদ সম্পর্কে পরামর্শ : আপনার যদি এই প্রকাশনার বিষয়বস্তু বুঝতে পারায় সমস্যা হয়, অনুগ্রহ করে এডুকেশন রিসেপশন (Education Reception)-এ চলে আসুন, যেখানে আমরা টেলিফোনে দোভাষীর সহায়তা দেবার ব্যবস্থা করতে পারবো।'

Bengali

"گاهی از امکانات ترجمه: اگر درک این نشریه برای تان مشکل است، لطفاً به بخش پذیرش اداره آموزش مراجعه کنید. در این بخش ما می توانیم ترتیب ترجمه تلفنی آن را برای شما بدهیم"

Farsi

ટ્રાન્સલેશન એડવાઈસ (ભાષાંતર સંબંધી સલાહ): જો તમને આ પુસ્તિકાની વિગતો સમજ ન પડતી હોય તો મહેરબાની કરી એજ્યુકેશન રિસેપ્શનમાં આવો જ્યાં અમે ટેલિફોન દ્વારા ગુજરાતીમાં સમજાવવા માટે ગોઠવણ કરી દેશું.

Gujarati

ਤਰਜਮੇ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਲਾਹ-ਮਸ਼ਵਰਾ: ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਲ ਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਐਜੂਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਰਿਸੈਪਸ਼ਨ 'ਤੇ ਆਓ, ਜਿਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ 'ਤੇ ਤਰਜਮੇ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

Punjabi

ترجمے سے متعلق مشورہ: اگر اس اشاعت کو سمجھنے میں آپ کو کوئی مشکل درپیش ہے تو براہ کرم "ایجوکیشن ریسپشن" سے رابطہ کیجئے، جن کا پتہ صفحہ نمبر 2 پر دیا گیا ہے، ہم آپ کے لئے ٹیلیفون پر ترجمہ کا انتظام کر سکتے ہیں۔

Urdu

If you would like a copy of this booklet in Braille, large print, on audiotape, or in a community language, please contact us on 020 8891 7500; Minicom number 020 8891 7539.

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Introduction

The Richmond upon Thames Joint Area Review of Children's Services published in December 2007 judged provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be outstanding. The authority believes that it can improve the educational outcomes of children with special educational needs (SEN) even further and this is a key priority in the Children and Young People's Plan. A review of SEN provision has been undertaken and a number of specialist provisions are in the process of being established. The extensive nature of the review has meant that much of the SEN policy published in July 2007 is now outdated and needs to be revised.

This policy¹ sets out:

- the Council's strategic aims for meeting the needs of pupils with SEN;
- the authority's specialist provision in mainstream schools and special schools;
- the resources available to schools to enable them to meet their responsibilities for SEN, both through direct funding and by centrally provided services;
- the responsibilities of school governing bodies in relation to SEN; and
- a description of the way the authority carries out its responsibilities.

The document is intended for everyone involved with special educational needs including head teachers, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), governors, particularly chairs and governors with responsibility for SEN, and for partner agencies in health and the voluntary sector. It should also be helpful for parents and carers. The authority has produced a range of leaflets on aspects of special educational needs that are available from the SEN Section, Children's Services and Culture, 42 York Street, Twickenham TW1 3BW and on the Council's website, www.richmond.gov.uk

1. Plans and strategic vision

1.1. Richmond upon Thames Corporate Plan 2009 - 2012

There are three key aims in the Corporate Plan that are relevant to children and young people with special educational needs:

- Implement a review of SEN provision.
- Ensure that children and young people with mental health issues get timely and effective support when needed.
- Ensure equitable access to respite and short break care for children and young people with additional health needs, disabilities and learning difficulties.

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- The policy meets the legal requirement for local authorities to publish information as set out in statutory regulations (SI 2001 No 2218)
- The document also explains schools' and local authorities' responsibilities set out in the special educational needs (SEN) Code of Practice 2001

1.2. Children and Young People's Plan

The Council's Children and Young People's Plan develops the key aims of the Corporate Plan and includes the following priorities for 2009 -2013:

- Pupils with special and additional needs (including those with School Action and School Action Plus support) will make good progress at school and fulfil their potential.
- Children and young people enjoy good emotional and mental health and get the support they need to address mental health issues quickly and effectively when they arise.
- All children and young people with additional needs, disabilities and learning difficulties get the support they need, including increased and equitable access to short breaks

Progress made in all the priorities is regularly monitored by measuring performance against targets set out in the plan. Regular reports are presented to the Children's Trust Board and the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The key strengths and the areas for improvement identified provide information for the annual review of the plan.

1.3. Richmond upon Thames SEN strategic vision

In carrying out its review of SEN provision, the authority has been guided by four principles:

- Children with SEN will have their needs met in mainstream schools whenever possible.
- Richmond borough special schools should be maintained and valued as resources of expertise, supporting mainstream schools where possible
- If provision in a special setting is necessary, it should be as local as possible.
- There should be as much choice for parents as possible

The authority takes a positive approach to meeting individual needs by offering a wide range of provision across the authority. It actively supports schools so that the majority of pupils' needs can be met within mainstream settings. To further this aim the authority is increasing the number of provisions within mainstream schools designated for children with statements of special educational needs. The borough also maintains two special schools that provide more specialist support if it is required.

Following the review of SEN provision the improved service is now delivered in four ways:

- **Enhanced specialist teaching provision:** This comprises a resource area in a mainstream school with additional specialist teachers, support staff and therapists. The children spend most of their time in mainstream classes with additional support but there is the facility for some withdrawal for intensive work. The specialist staff provide mainstream teachers with on-site support and advice.

- **Gathered provision:** This provides a resource base in a mainstream school with its own staffing (specialist teaching, teaching assistants and therapists) and specialist teaching facilities. Children spend a significant proportion of their time in the base but are able to be included in mainstream lessons as much as possible.
- **Special schools:** It is proposed to make use of the expertise of Clarendon and Strathmore to support the mainstream schools and enhance their provision for pupils with additional autistic spectrum conditions.
- **Early years provision:** Specialist provision is being increased in line with trends in identified special educational needs

While we acknowledge that, as a small authority, we cannot make arrangements for every type of special educational need or disability, we do aim to make appropriate arrangements for as many of our children and young people as possible within their local community. With the exception of Strathmore School none of the authority's specialist provisions extends beyond age 16. The authority works closely with Richmond upon Thames College and Connexions to make sure that young people's needs are met after 16.

2. Specialist provision in mainstream and special schools

2.1 Specialist Provision in Mainstream Schools

As stated above, SEN provision in mainstream schools has been established as either enhanced specialist teaching provision or gathered provision. The location of these provisions is set out in the tables below.

The following abbreviations are used:

- ASC - autistic spectrum conditions
- MLD – moderate learning difficulties
- SpLD - specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia)
- BESD - behavioural, emotional and social development
- SLCN – speech, language and communication.

Primary Phase

School	Provision	Places
Darell Primary School	Gathered provision for moderate and severe learning difficulties at Reception and Key Stage 1	8
The Russell Primary School	Gathered provision for severe and complex learning difficulties including children with ASC at Key Stage 1.	5
Holy Trinity and East Sheen primary schools	Enhanced primary specialist provision BESD for Key Stage 2. Oldfield House to become the hub for Key Stage 2	9 (3 each)

and Hampton Hill Juniors	BESD enhanced specialist teaching provision (4 places)*.	school)
Jigsaw (Windham)	ASC gathered provision	8 Part-time
Buckingham Primary School	Gathered provision to meet severe and complex needs at Key Stage 1.	8
George Tancred Centre (St James Primary School)	ASC gathered provision at Key Stages 1 and 2	10
Heathfield Junior School	Key Stage 2 gathered provision for communication and interaction.	10
Heathfield Infant School	Key Stage 1 gathered provision for communication and interaction	10
St Mary's Primary School	Key Stages 1 and 2 gathered provision for communication and interaction	10
Stanley Primary School	Develop existing MLD unit as a 10 place (five am and 5 pm) foundation stage ASC gathered provision and provide an additional 17 ASC places for Key Stages 1 and 2 (Open September 2012)	22

* Oldfield House is managed by Clarendon School

Secondary Phase

School	Provision	Places
Orleans Park School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement, specific learning difficulties.	6
Grey Court School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs. (Open September 2011)	8
The Gateway	ASC gathered provision for Key Stages 3 and 4. Students are integrated into mainstream classes and activities at Twickenham Academy. Management responsibility for Gateway rests with Clarendon School.	20
Hampton Academy	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus. (Open September 2012)	6
Richmond Park Academy	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus. (Open January 2012)	6
Waldegrave School(Girls)	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus (Open September 2011)	6
Christ's School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for Specific learning difficulties. (Open September 2011)	6
Teddington	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for	6

School	Specific learning difficulties. (Open September 2012)	
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2.2 Special Schools – Clarendon

Clarendon is a special day school for 120 pupils aged 7 to 16 with moderate learning difficulties and autistic spectrum conditions. Twenty of the 120 places are at The Gateway Centre (adjacent to Twickenham Academy) and are for students with autistic spectrum conditions. Clarendon is also responsible for the Oldfield House Unit, which has four places and is the hub for Key Stage 2 BESD enhanced specialist teaching provision. The school is part of the continuum created to meet special educational needs within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames.

2.3 Special Schools – Strathmore

Strathmore School is a co-educational special day school for 47 pupils aged 7 to 19 who have severe learning difficulties and complex needs, including autistic spectrum disorders. Provision is made for older students to access one of the three local colleges. Close links are also maintained with The Russell Primary School, which is on an adjacent site and has a Key Stage 1 gathered provision for children with severe and complex learning difficulties. Links are also maintained with other local primary and secondary schools.

3. Alternative provision for secondary age children with BESD

Richmond House has changed its status from a unit designated for children with statements of SEN to become part of a broader service for children with BESD difficulties, which includes pupils who would previously attended the Pupil Referral Service (PRS). The new service offers specialist provision on several sites including Richmond House. The service facilitates an enhanced alternative curriculum drawing on the expertise of schools, the FE sector and alternative providers. The service also benefits from an integrated multi-agency team providing support from a range of specialist agencies. Children who would previously have received a statement naming Richmond House will normally be statemented to their existing school and have access to the new service depending on their level of need. Similarly, pupils at risk of exclusion will have access to both short and long term intervention programmes.

4. Funding

4.1. Funding special educational needs

4.1.1. Special educational provision paid for from school budget shares

“The special educational needs of the great majority of children should be met effectively within mainstream settings through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus or School Action

and School Action Plus without the local education authority needing to make a statutory assessment.”

SEN Code of Practice 2001, 7:1

Schools' governing bodies must manage their delegated budget to provide the best possible provision for all pupils, including those with SEN. None of schools' budgets, apart from specific grant funding, is ring-fenced. Governors and head teachers can make their own spending decisions on their budget so that they can meet their legal responsibilities² regarding SEN.

There are 6 elements in the Schools Funding Formula which are allocated under the heading Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Social Priority.

- The first component, Social Deprivation is based on the number of pupils in the school who are entitled to a free school meal. This indicator has been shown nationally to be a reliable guide to the overall level of social deprivation in a school.
- The second component, Pockets of Deprivation is given only to those schools where the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals exceeds 15%.
- The third component, a Flat Rate, (funding approximately the cost of a teacher for secondary schools and 0.3 of a teacher for primary schools) is to cover the cost of a special educational needs coordinator (SENCO). Since 2009 this post has been a statutory requirement. All SENCOs must now be qualified teachers and if newly appointed, have attended nationally recognised training.
- The fourth component, Learning Support Units (secondary only) is distributed on a flat rate and the funding is earmarked to support a range of appropriate provision in relation to pupils with behaviour difficulties.
- The fifth component, Social Inclusion has two elements. One is based on the number of pupils in the school who are entitled to a free school meal and the other part is based on the number of year 7 pupils achieving below Level 4 in English.
- The sixth type of funding schools receive is allocated through individual children's statements of SEN. It is the total sum of the banding levels (see below) of all pupils in the school with a statement.

Appendix A describes the type of activity that may be carried out by a school in response to the differing levels of children's special educational needs at the School Action, School Action Plus and Statutory Action stages of The SEN Code of Practice.

The guidelines below are used by the SEN panel when allocating extra provision. However, they should not be rigidly

² See Section 4 Governors' SEN responsibilities.

interpreted, as each child's individual needs must be considered when deciding on appropriate arrangements. For convenience, and consistency, levels of support are divided into bands. The panel does not have to stick rigidly to these bands. It decides whether the support should be additional teaching, additional non-teaching support or a combination of the two. The form that the support takes is specified on individual statements. The panel's decisions are based on consensus. However, the Chair is ultimately accountable for its decisions.

Current indicative banding levels are shown in the following table:

Band	Learning difficulty or disability	Levels of support
		Banding levels are expressed in hours of teacher support or equivalent. One hour of teacher support is the approximate financial equivalent of two hours from a teaching assistant. This includes the range of support, planning and delivery of appropriate programmes needed to meet the requirement of the individual statement. It may include support, group work and planning time.
A	Rarely used. Only when a child may need, for example, just one or two withdrawal sessions to work on a particular skill. Sometimes used as a transitional support as previous provision is being progressively reduced.	One hour 35 minutes teacher support, or equivalent
B	General (moderate) learning difficulties; specific learning difficulties, dyslexia; moderate speech and language difficulties; some hearing impaired (HI).	Three hours 15 minutes teacher support, or equivalent

Band	Learning difficulty or disability	Levels of support
C	Behaviour, emotional and social development (BESD), including some learning difficulties.	Five hours teacher support, or equivalent
D	Slightly more severe BESD, perhaps with more significant learning difficulties; mild autistic spectrum disorder with some additional difficulties; more complex HI.	Five hours 45 minutes teacher support, or equivalent
E	As for D but with additional severity or complexity.	Six hours, 30 minutes teacher support, or equivalent
F	More severe BESD, often with significant learning difficulties; visually impaired (registered partially sighted); moderate physical disabilities (PD); more complex ASD with associated learning difficulties and challenging behaviour.	Eight hours, 15 minutes teacher support, or equivalent
G	As for F but more severe.	Ten hours teacher support, or equivalent
H	Very severe PD requiring high level of personal care and supervision; educationally blind or Braille user; severely challenging behaviour with significant health and safety risks; severe learning difficulties; including some children with Down Syndrome, where there is a high level of personal care needed with significant health and safety risks.	Thirty two hours 30 minutes learning support assistance
X		Individually specified support hours for pupils who require support of a different level from any other given bands.

4.2 Special educational provision and support held centrally by the Local Authority

The local authority holds some funding centrally for special educational provision. Details and service level agreements relating to these services are set out in the Services to Schools Handbook.

4.2.1 Educational Psychology Service

The Educational Psychology Service provides support to schools by allocating a set amount of time to each school, based on the level of need. There is also an allocation for psychologists' work with children under school age. There are currently 6.5 (fte) psychologists with an additional 0.5 fte psychologist working as part of the Children Looked After Team.

4.2.2 Portage Service

The Portage Service works closely with the Educational Psychology Service and supports parents whose children are under school age. The work of the Portage Service is described further in paragraph 6.4

4.2.3 Learning Needs Team

A small Learning Needs Team of teachers provides advice, training and support to schools. For some pupils in primary schools identified with specific learning difficulties, there is additional help at School Action Plus from learning needs support teachers (2 fte) who are qualified in teaching pupils with specific learning difficulties.

4.2.4 Social Inclusion Advisory Teachers

The team (1.8 fte teachers) offers consultation and advice to children and young people, parents and schools to help them understand and manage behaviour. The offer might include training and INSET around SEAL, Positive Behaviour Management, managing conflict, resilience training and the psychology of learning. The team also monitors and assesses vulnerable pupils, providing small group work, support and mediation.

4.2.5 Sensory Impairment Team

There is a combined team qualified to teach children with hearing and visual problems (4.3 fte) plus a 0.6fte specialist teaching assistant. The teachers of hearing impaired children support pupils with a diagnosis of hearing loss ranging from a mild loss, which has a minimal effect on a child's language and speech development, to a profound hearing loss. Staff also advise schools about the use of appropriate equipment.

Peripatetic teachers who are qualified to teach children who are blind or partially sighted also teach the use of Braille and advise schools on the use of appropriate equipment.

4.2.6 Alternative Provision Offer

The local authority no longer has a Pupil Referral Service (see section 3). The focus is for all young people to be successful in a mainstream school setting. At the same time, however, it is acknowledged that young people might need to access education away from a mainstream setting. The authority offers specialist educational provision at several sites across the borough for both short and long term intervention. The programmes are supported by a dedicated multi agency team.

4.2.7 Special Educational Needs Section

This is the administrative section in the Children's Services and Culture Directorate that carries out the authority's responsibilities for SEN in relation to statutory assessment.

4.2.8 Parent Partnership Workers

Two part-time independent parent partnership workers based at The Croft Centre are able to advise parents or carers at all stages of the statutory assessment process.

4.3 The Early Years and Childcare Service

Funding for early years is provided by the Government through the general Sure Start Grant, topped up by the Council. Funding for SEN provides one lead area SENCO working with the children with the most complex needs and Early Years consultants whose role includes offering support on SEN and inclusion.

5. School governing body responsibilities for special educational needs

5.1 School governing bodies must legally:

- Take into account the SEN Code of Practice when carrying out their duties towards all pupils with SEN.
- Take into consideration the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Draw up and publish the school's policy on SEN according to the guidance in the Code of Practice and make it freely available to parents and carers.
- Make sure that there are appropriate staffing and funding arrangements, and oversee the work of the school in relation to SEN;
- Make sure that there are clear lines of accountability, by nominating a governor to have specific responsibility for SEN, and a governor for children looked after by the local authority. (Governing bodies may wish to appoint a committee to monitor the school's work for children with SEN).
- Make sure the 'responsible person' for special educational needs, (usually the head teacher or named governor) has been told by the authority that a pupil has special educational needs and that those needs are made known to everyone that teaches the pupil.
- Make sure that a pupil with special educational needs joins in the activities of the school, as far as possible, together with pupils who do not have special educational needs.
- Make sure that all teachers in the school are aware of the importance of identifying, and providing for, those pupils who have SEN.
- Make sure that the parents are notified of a decision by the school that SEN arrangements are being made for their child.
- Make sure that necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN.
- Consult the authority and the governing bodies of other schools when it is necessary or desirable in the interests of co-ordinated special educational provision across the area as a whole.
- Make sure the school has a SENCO who is a qualified teacher, is suitably trained (where applicable), determine his/her key responsibilities and monitor the effectiveness of the way the responsibilities are carried out.

5.2 Admission of pupils with SEN

Admission authorities may not refuse to admit a child because they feel unable to cater for their special educational needs. A parent's wish to have their child with a statement educated in a mainstream school can only be

refused in the small minority of cases where it can be demonstrated that a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children. Governing bodies must admit pupils with special educational needs where their school is named on the child's statement. Schools may not agree to accept a child conditional on a level of support being provided by the authority.

6. The local authority's responsibilities for special educational needs

6.1. Action the authority is taking to promote high standards of education for children with special educational needs

The authority promotes a positive attitude towards learning difficulties and disabilities. It tries to make sure that all pupils with SEN are correctly identified and educational arrangements are of a high standard. This is achieved through a number of means:

- Termly multi-professional meetings held in schools support them in identifying pupils' needs, tracking progress and checking that appropriate arrangements are being made. This is also the mechanism by which support for schools is requested.
- The achievements of pupils with SEN are recognised and celebrated. Schools track pupil progress using P Scales and National Curriculum levels. SEN achievement data is collected by the authority and then analysed to make sure that satisfactory progress is being made by all pupils.
- The continuing professional development of staff is given a high priority. The authority funds training for teachers and support staff so they are appropriately skilled to support a wide range of needs. Support services also provide high quality advice and training to schools.
- The special educational needs provision for each school is audited yearly through supported self review. This helps recognise good practice and identifies areas for improvement. The specialist provisions are also subject to regular reviews.
- As explained in 4.1.1 all schools are given additional funding to help meet the salary of a SEN coordinator (SENCO). Further funding is allocated through the SEN panel to support the needs of pupils with SEN statements.

6.2. Action the authority is taking to encourage children with special educational needs to participate fully in their school and community and to take part in decisions about their education

The authority recognises pupils' entitlement to an education that meets their needs and for their voice to be heard (as required by the United

Nations Convention³ on the Rights of the Child, referred to in the Code of Practice). The authority takes account of what pupils with SEN think about their curriculum, school placement and future plans for meeting their special educational needs in six ways:

- At School Action and School Action Plus, schools must make sure that pupils identified as having SEN are involved in the development of their own individual education plan and in setting their own targets. Schools should make sure pupils are involved whenever these targets are discussed or reviewed.
- While they are carrying out their assessments of individual pupils, educational psychologists ask children what they think about their special educational needs and how they think their teachers can help them best. The psychologists will tell the relevant adults, including their parents and teachers, what the pupils have said, and include their comments in their reports. Teachers of children with a sensory impairment also include any views expressed by children in their reports. The SEN panel will consider these reports when they make decisions about the children's education through the assessment process.
- When the authority is carrying out a statutory assessment of a child's special educational needs, children are also sent an age appropriate questionnaire to elicit their views.
- At the annual review of pupils' statements of special educational needs, schools must record any information they have about what pupils think about their current educational provision and what they would like for the future. The authority provides good practice guidance to SENCOs underlining the need to establish pupils' views. The SENCOs should make sure their understanding of the pupil's views are up-to-date through regular discussion with the pupil's class or subject teachers, and other professionals who regularly work with them.
- Pupils' personal advisers, assigned through the Connexions Service, should be an additional channel of communication to the authority on the young person's views.
- Should an appeal be lodged with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST), subject to parental agreement, the child's views on issues relating to the appeal are sought by the parent partnership worker to pass on to the Tribunal.

6.3. Dissemination of good practice within the authority relating to the arrangements for children with special educational needs

The authority routinely advises schools about training opportunities, and encourages them to share the good practice they have developed in the classroom. There are a wide range of development opportunities for SENCOs, classroom teachers, and learning support assistants, in relation to SEN. Schools should identify their own development needs and decide how to meet them. This can be done in a number of ways, for example:

³ Drawn from the 1994 Salamanca Agreement

- specific training for helping with pupils with particular disabilities or difficulties, such as autistic spectrum disorder or sensory impairments;
- participation in courses, (for example, about specific learning difficulties or managing pupils' behaviour);
- following an accredited course provided by the authority in conjunction with the Special Educational Needs Joint Initiative for Training (SENJIT);
- providing time for a SENCO to develop a particular project with the educational psychologist, for example, or to train parents and volunteers.
- Coordinating a meeting of SENCOs in separate primary and secondary groups once a term to:
 - participate in training or receive information about other services;
 - discuss particular areas of interest;
 - keep up-to-date with the law and new ideas about SEN; and
 - share good practice at their annual conference organised by the authority.
 - There are also termly meetings of SENCOs within each Quindrat which are attended by educational psychologists and other specialist support workers.
- Making arrangements for staff of special schools and schools with specialist provisions to meet on a regular basis to discuss current issues, share ideas about good practice and receive information about local and national developments.

6.4. Action the authority is taking to work with other statutory and voluntary bodies to provide support for children with special educational needs

In accordance with the SEN Code of Practice, the borough works in partnership with parents and the voluntary sector, valuing their views and involvement. The SEN Code of Practice sets out the principles of working in partnership with parents. The authority encompasses these principles by:

- Funding the Three Wings Trust which manages the parent partnership workers. The parent partnership workers liaise with the authority to support parental involvement in the education of children with special educational needs. They assist the authority in making sure that the information it publishes is accessible to all parents, and that the advice parents receive is comprehensive, factual and appropriate. Other aspects of the parent partnership workers' role in supporting parents are to:
 - provide accurate and objective information to parents on the arrangements or support provided by the authority for children with special educational needs;

- provide objective advice as to legislative procedures and authority policies;
 - liaise with relevant agencies and professionals; and
 - establish and promote support groups of parents.
- Making sure that parents have free access to the London Disagreement Resolution Service. Where parents are in disagreement with schools or the authority, they may request the use of this London-wide service. It is independent of the authority and provides trained staff to help parents, schools and the authority find a mutually acceptable and constructive way forward on the assessment of, or provision for, children with SEN.
 - Providing multi-agency support for pupils aged between 11 and 16 who are experiencing difficulties in their mainstream schools and are in danger of becoming permanently excluded from school, or in need of personal support because of social difficulties or offending behaviour.

The SEN Section and Social Inclusion Services, which includes Education Other than at School (EOTAS), have forged close links to support disaffected young people. Meetings are held between the teams on a fortnightly basis to discuss young people that both teams are dealing with. These can be young people who are displaying disaffection through inappropriate behaviour, or if the team is looking for a more suitable placement to meet a young person's needs.

Each case is discussed separately with clear actions agreed by a named officer. Officers from Social Inclusion Services attend the SEN panel where cases can be discussed and decisions reached to support young people.

Individual programmes are provided for young people when it becomes clear that a placement is no longer appropriate and exclusion is likely.

The programme will be for a limited period and will be agreed by parents and young people. Tutors keep in contact with schools to make sure that the curriculum offered meets the young people's needs.

The authority works with several agencies and groups that support children with SEN and their families, including:

- **The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership** is the overarching multi-agency group that oversees the delivery of services to children and young people. It includes representatives from the primary care trust, Children's Services and Culture, the voluntary sector and parents or carers. The partnership has a sub-group for children with disabilities, with similar membership at an operational level.
- **The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Commissioning Sub-Group** is a multi-agency sub-group of the Mental Health Commissioning Group. It includes representatives from the Council's Education and Children's Services Directorate, from the primary care trust and from the South-West London and St George's Mental Health Trust from whom the primary care trust commissions mental health services, in addition to representatives from CAMHS itself. Its purpose is to distribute mental health services for children and young people according to need. There are two additional CAHMS

posts for children with disabilities and learning difficulties, a 0.5 family therapist and a 0.5 clinical psychologist.

- **Children's Therapy Services** are the responsibility of Richmond and Twickenham Primary Care Trust, although the cost of speech and language therapy is part met by the authority. Occupational therapy and physiotherapy services are available for children and young people across special schools, specialist provisions and mainstream settings. Speech and language therapy is provided to pupils at key stages 1 and 2. It is also provided to pupils in secondary specialist provisions and to secondary aged pupils with statements as necessary.
- **The Connexions Service** is a partnership across six south London boroughs, linking all agencies providing services for 13 to 19 year olds. It provides an integrated support service for young people and their carers to help them become involved in learning and employment. In Richmond upon Thames personal advisers provide a universal service to all students. They provide intensive support to young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties who are at risk of exclusion and those who are not participating effectively in learning. Advisers also participate in a range of projects to influence and improve learning provision and other services for all young people.
- **The Transition Steering Group** is a multi-agency group which includes representatives from Children's Services and Culture, the primary care trust, the voluntary sector, parents and the Connexions Service. The steering group monitors pupils' transition from school to Post 16 provision or to employment, to make sure that it is smooth and that pupils' needs continue to be met.

When a pupil with a statement of SEN reaches year 9, at 13+, there is a transition review, at which schools draw up a transition plan. As well as the young person and their parents or carers, this review should be attended by an authority officer to monitor procedures and a representative from Connexions, to provide careers advice as part of the review.

The review focuses on the young person's hopes for the future and covers planning for independent living, including issues regarding housing. The transition plan is updated and monitored each year until the pupil leaves school.

- **Windham/The Croft Centre** brings together a range of statutory and voluntary services including specialist services for disabled children. This includes the social work team for children who have significant and permanent disabilities, the short-term break team and Crofters. Crofters offers a range of after school clubs, holiday play schemes and residential holidays for disabled children.

Windham Nursery houses:

- the Jigsaw Unit: a pre-school unit for children with autistic spectrum or communication disorders that is attached to Windham Nursery and located in purpose built accommodation within the Croft Centre. It caters for up to eight children who attend on a half-time basis.

- the Portage Service: a pre-school service for children who have significant learning difficulties and, or autistic spectrum disorders, which is funded by the authority and the primary care trust. Portage home visitors work with parents and carers to devise programmes to be carried out at home with the children. The portage workers link with other services such as speech and language therapists, occupational and physiotherapists as well as playgroups and nurseries.

The Portage Service and speech and language therapists run weekly communication groups at the Croft Centre. Two portage workers attend the weekly toy library session organised by the voluntary sector and provide informal advice to families who may be on the waiting list for home visiting.

- The Child Development Team: has multi-agency representatives from Children's Services and Health. It meets fortnightly at the Croft Centre to co-ordinate services for young children with significant special needs. Joint assessments are carried out by a range of professionals working together leading to family support plans.
- The Three Wings Trust: offers a telephone helpline for parents with enquiries about services and compiles a regular newsletter. The project helps to establish and monitor services by liaising with statutory authorities and the voluntary sector, and by taking part in the consultation process. Membership is open to anyone interested in promoting the welfare of children with special educational needs and their families.

6.5. General arrangements made by the local authority for identifying children with special educational needs

6.5.1. Pre-school planning meeting

A multi-agency meeting comprising paediatricians, therapists, the portage service manager, educational psychologists, the inspector for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, early years area SENCOs, peripatetic teachers, and other appropriate professionals meets twice a year. The purpose of the meeting is to make sure everyone is aware of young children's needs and any arrangements needed at phase transfer. Children's needs are discussed as soon as one of the agencies becomes aware of them. This meeting provides valuable information about the early identification of children with complex special needs. The information assists the authority in planning future arrangements.

6.5.2. The Child Development Team (CDT)

The team identifies the needs of children with complex needs from as early as six months. It includes representatives from community paediatrics, Educational Psychology Service, the Speech and Language Therapy Service, Occupational Therapy

Service, Physiotherapy Service, Portage, and teachers of visual and hearing impaired pupils. CDT also includes the area SENCOs, an outreach worker, paediatricians, social workers and specialist health visitors.

6.5.3. School-aged children

Schools are responsible for identifying children who may have special educational needs. If School Action is appropriate the class teacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school's usual strategies and differentiated curriculum.

At School Action Plus external support services, both those provided by the authority and by outside agencies, will usually see the child so that they can:

- advise teachers on new individual education plans with fresh targets and strategies
- provide more specialist assessments that will provide information for the planning and measurement of pupil progress
- give advice on the use of new or specialist strategies or materials, and in some cases provide for particular activities.

The authority follows the guidelines in the SEN Code of Practice on the identification of children with special educational needs.

6.6. General arrangements made by the local authority for monitoring the admission of children with special educational needs (whether or not those children have a statement) to maintained schools in their area

The authority is responsible for:

- The admission to mainstream community schools in Richmond upon Thames of children whose special educational needs are met at School Action or School Action Plus. Voluntary aided schools manage their own admissions;
- The admission to all maintained schools of children with a statement of SEN. The child's statement of SEN, together with current reports on the child's progress, are referred to the parent's preferred school for comment, as legally required.

The Code of Practice 2001 and DfES Guidance: 'Inclusive Schooling; children with special educational needs', strongly emphasises the right of parents to have access to mainstream education for their child. It is only if the school's governing body provides clear evidence that including the child in the school would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, that the authority would consider refusing a parent's request for a mainstream school;

- Making sure that all statements that involve phase transfers are amended and sent out to parents by 15 February, before the September of transfer;
- Offering all parents and carers a meeting with the Head of SEN or other authority officer where there is disagreement or need for clarification on the placement of a child;
- Delivering actions that have been agreed⁴ after parents have referred their case to the London Disagreement Resolution Service; and
- Considering up to a year before the phase transfer any likely changes of placement for children attending special schools and units. If required, SEN officers meet with parents to discuss placements and to make sure that parents' views are conveyed to the SEN panel.

6.7 Placing children with statements of special educational needs in Academies

Annex C of the model funding agreement for Academies (August 2010) states:

1. *'The Academy Trust must ensure that pupils with SEN are admitted on an equal basis with others in accordance with its admissions policy.'*
2. *'Where a local authority ("LA") proposes to name the Academy in a*

⁴ Although many issues will be resolved through mediation parents and carers have the right of appeal for children with statements of SEN through the SEN and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST).

statement of SEN made in accordance with section 324 of the Education Act 1996, it must give the Academy Trust written notice that it so proposes. Within 15 days of receipt of the LA's notice that it proposes to name the Academy in a statement, the Academy Trust must consent to being named, except where admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education for other children; and where no reasonable steps may be made to secure compatibility. In deciding whether a child's inclusion would be incompatible with the efficient education of other children, the Academy Trust must have regard to the relevant guidance issued by the Secretary of State to maintained schools.

3. 'If the Academy Trust determines that admitting the child would be incompatible with the provision of efficient education, it must, within 15 days of receipt of the LA's notice, notify the LA in writing that it does not agree that the Academy should be named in the pupil's statement. Such notice must set out all the facts and matters the Academy relies upon in support of its contention that: (a) admitting the child would be incompatible with efficiently educating other children; and (b) the Academy Trust cannot take reasonable steps to secure this compatibility.

4. 'After service by the Academy Trust on the LA of any notice (further to paragraph 6 above) stating that it does not agree with the LA's proposal that the Academy be named, the Academy Trust must seek to establish from the LA, as soon as is reasonably practicable, whether or not the LA agrees with the Academy Trust. If the LA notifies the Academy that it does not agree with the Academy Trust's response, and names the Academy in the child's statement, the Academy Trust must admit the child to the school on the date specified in the statement or on the date specified by the LA.

5. 'Where the Academy Trust consider that the Academy should not have been named in a child's statement, they may ask the Secretary of State to determine that the LA has acted unreasonably in naming the Academy and to make an order directing the LA to reconsider.

6. 'The Secretary of State's determination shall, subject only to any right of appeal which any parent or guardian of the child may have to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability), be final.

7. 'If a parent or guardian of a child in respect of whom a statement is maintained by the local authority appeals to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) either against the naming of the Academy in the child's SEN statement or asking the Tribunal to name the Academy, then the decision of the Tribunal on any such appeal shall be binding and shall, if different from that of the Secretary of State under paragraph 9 above, be substituted for the Secretary of State's decision.

8. 'Where the Academy, the Secretary of State or the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) have determined that it should be named, the Academy Trust shall admit the child to the Academy notwithstanding any provision of Annex B to this agreement.'

6.8 General arrangements made by the authority for organising the assessment of children’s educational needs relating to section 323 of the Education Act 1996

The authority organises the statutory assessment of children’s SEN in line with the SEN Code of Practice 2001.

An SEN panel decides whether or not a statutory assessment is necessary on the basis of evidence provided. This evidence may include:

- evidence the school has collected, including from outside specialists, under School Action Plus; and
- evidence from educational psychologists, health specialists, and pre-school specialists;

The authority guidelines attached as Appendix A (Guidance on School Action, School Action Plus and Statutory Action) are designed to make sure that there is a consistent approach to all children by setting out threshold levels of attainment in the areas of need identified in the SEN Code of Practice. These are:

- communication and interaction;
- cognition and learning;
- behavioural, emotional and social; and
- sensory and, or physical.

Attainment below these thresholds, provided appropriate action has been taken at School Action Plus, **may** indicate the need for a statutory assessment. A copy of the Guidance is attached in appendix A.

6.9 General arrangements made by the local authority for organising the making and maintaining of statements

Decisions on whether to carry out statutory assessments and issue statements are made by the SEN panel. Panel decisions are made by consensus, however it is the chair of the panel who is accountable for its decisions. Its membership includes head teachers, the principal educational psychologist, senior officers and the inspector for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Assessment reports are carefully considered and provide the evidence on which decisions are made. Where the panel decides to issue a statement for a child in a mainstream school the guidance set out in 4.1 informs the decision on the level of support that will be attached to the statement. This makes sure that resources are allocated consistently and fairly.

All statements (and therefore resource allocation) are reviewed each year through the annual review process. The SEN Section tells schools each term about the pupils in their school who will need an annual review. Schools are responsible for arranging and minuting the annual review meeting. They should record on the authority’s form whether or not the statement is still needed or needs amending, together with notes of the meeting. The SEN panel may decide to amend the statement as a result of

further information or as a result of recommendations from an annual review. Pupils needs may either increase or decrease.

To make sure that pupils (with a statement of need) reaching the end of key stage 4 have a smooth transition into life after school or preparation for employment, the local authority holds bi-annual planning meetings. The group comprises the: Head of SEN, the inspector for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, the principal educational psychologist, heads of the authority's special schools, the Connexions adviser, children's services representation and the SEN Manager from Richmond upon Thames College.

6.10 General arrangements made by the authority to provide support to schools with regard to making special educational provision for children with special educational needs

As set out in paragraph 4.1, the authority delegates the majority of funds for children with special educational needs to schools. This helps schools to use the funding flexibly, taking account of the children's needs, the legal provisions of the statement, and the staffing and other resources at their disposal.

The funding covers pupils whose needs are addressed at School Action and School Action Plus, and those who have statements of special educational needs, with the exception of those who have a sensory impairment requiring specialist teaching (see below). Schools' delegated funds can be used to purchase support from a specialist team of peripatetic learning support assistants (PLSA) that support children with significant physical disabilities or with severe visual impairment.

The authority retains funding centrally for some additional support for pupils whose needs are addressed at School Action Plus, and for pupils who have a sensory impairment requiring specialist teaching. There is a small centrally funded team of peripatetic specialist teachers for children with visual and hearing impairments that provides a service for pre-school as well as school-age children.

Schools can obtain support at School Action Plus through:

- The attached **educational psychologist** who provides service to the school through a time allocation model. As consultants, educational psychologists work with key school staff to help them meet the needs of pupils. This may include carrying out individual assessments of children, providing specialist training and intervention or project work.
- **The Learning Needs Team (LNT)**, which supports schools by recommending specific programmes, strategies and resources. These include programmes and up-to-date resources for improving literacy. The LNT, together with the Education Psychology Service, provides training as part of the authority's SEN programme of continuing professional development.

The LNT collaborates with London University's Institute of Education to provide accredited training locally for Richmond upon Thames teachers. This aims to help school staff increase their knowledge, skills and

awareness of pupils with SEN, improve their confidence in planning for and teaching these pupils and so raise their attainment.

- Referrals to the **Learning Needs Support Teachers**, which are received twice a year. Teachers in the team, together with the principal educational psychologist and the lead inspector for Inclusion (special educational needs), health and well being, consider each child's need for support. The team provides support for pupils with the greatest level of need. One day of support is provided to identified schools during which time they work with individual children, and training is delivered to staff.
- The **Social Inclusion Advisory Teachers** work with children and young people, parents and schools to understand and manage behaviour in mainstream primary schools across the borough.
- The **Speech and Language Therapy Service** which will assess the speech, language and communication needs of primary-aged children and provide programmes, strategies and suggest appropriate resources to maximise the child's language and learning opportunities across the whole school curriculum. There is an emphasis on joint working and the identification of the child's needs.
- The Children's **Physiotherapy Services** which will assess the physical needs of children and provide programmes and strategies and suggest appropriate resources to promote independence, maximise the child's physical development and help the child to reach their full potential. There is an emphasis on joint working and the identification of the child's needs.
- The **Occupational Therapy Services** which will assess functional difficulties in daily life and provide appropriate programmes and strategies. The service will suggest suitable resources to adapt the task or environment to promote independence, maximise the child's functional skills and help the child to reach their full potential. There is an emphasis on joint working and the identification of the child's needs.
- The **Child and Family Consultation Centre (Richmond Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)**, based at the Richmond Royal Hospital assesses and treats the mental health problems of children aged 0 to 18 living in the borough or registered with a Richmond upon Thames GP. Referrals are received on the CAF form from any professional involved with the child who is concerned about behavioural or emotional problems displayed at school or at home that cannot be assessed or treated by tier 2 primary care services.

6.11 General arrangements made by the authority for auditing, planning, monitoring and reviewing arrangements for children with special educational needs in their areas, both generally and for individual children

Ofsted inspection reports on schools provide a judgement on the arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. These reports are carefully scrutinised by The School Effectiveness Service and should it be necessary suitable training and support is given.

Audit information relating to pupils in special schools and special units, and pupils with statements placed outside the borough, by age and need is looked at on a regular basis by the SEN officers group and used to provide information for strategic planning. Audit information is also kept for pupils with or without statements with visual or hearing impairment and for pupils without statements with specific learning difficulties. All audit information is regularly updated using the Pupil Level Annual School Census. Numbers of pupils in each school at School Action and School Action Plus are recorded in the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC).

The authority will not usually agree to the placement of pupils with statements in schools that are identified as being in special measures, or in schools where other significant concerns have been identified.

Arrangements for individual pupils are considered during the course of annual reviews.

6.12 General arrangements made by the local authority for securing training, advice and support for staff working in their area with children with special educational needs.

In Richmond upon Thames, the Educational Psychology Service offers training and project work to schools in addition to its statutory work on assessing pupils. The Learning Needs Team, Sensory Impairment Team and Education Psychology Service contribute to the central programme of continuing professional development. These services also provide training in individual schools, according to the needs identified by the schools. The LNT provides induction for new SENCOs, to help them understand their role in the school and establish support networks. They also train SENCOs through a programme provided in conjunction with SENJIT. This can lead to the Advanced Diploma in special educational needs.

The authority provides regular training on governors' responsibilities for children with SEN in the Governor Training Programme. Authority officers also provide input to training for social workers and health professionals.

At the request of schools, the lead inspector for inclusion (special educational needs), health and wellbeing co-ordinates the schools' Standards Fund SEN training grant, for training on all aspects of SEN. The resulting training programme is full and comprehensive, covering a wide range of needs. It is available to all schools and authority staff working with pupils with SEN.

The Early Years Development and Childcare Plan provides similar opportunities for training for early years providers and teachers. Under the plan there is funding for each SENCO in an early years non-maintained setting to have training on their responsibilities. Training is also available to owners or managers on their responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act and SEN and Disability Act.

6.13 General arrangements made by the authority for reviewing and updating the arrangements referred to above

Officers and elected members of the Council take proposals for change to a number of groups for consultation in advance of any decisions. These groups included:

- The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- The primary and a secondary head teachers' forum
- The CWDLD Partnership Group
- Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership
- Children's Trust Board

The Council's Cabinet makes policy decisions relating to SEN, taking advice from officers as necessary and from the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee whose membership includes the parent governor representative for SEN.