

Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

Learning and Children's Services

A Parents' Guide

**to the Kingston Policy
on Special Educational Needs**

2006-2007



Equality of Opportunity

The Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames believes that all residents of this borough, along with other users of its services, are entitled to fair and equal access to the full range of its services. It does not tolerate discrimination in any form and actively looks to identify where there is discrimination and to make the necessary changes to stop it.

You can be assured that the Local Authority (LA):

- Does not allow any form of discrimination to be acceptable in the way it provides services or its members of staff deal with any members of the public.
- Will be constantly trying to improve, including the way it keeps records and monitors discrimination, to ensure everyone receives fair treatment.
- Will listen to you and ensure that your views are followed up with appropriate action. If you feel that you have not been treated fairly, your concerns will be treated with the seriousness they deserve.

**If you have difficulty understanding this document, please contact
the Guildhall Information Desk
(Large Print available) Telephone 020 8547 5757**

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The Department for Education & Skills (DfES) produces a guide for parents to explain SEN and the rights of parents. We have only used extracts. You can download a copy from: www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/3755/Parents%20Guide.pdf

The Local Authority's plans

We have written this booklet to explain Kingston Council's Policy and describe the things we are doing to continue improving the help for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). We sometimes use the phrase Local Authority (LA) to describe the Education part of the Council and to make it clearer that there are differences between the Council's responsibilities and those of its schools.

The government publishes a guide, known as the SEN Code of Practice. The Code tells us children with SEN stand the best chance if they have good teaching and receive help for any difficulties as soon as possible, 'early intervention'. It encourages LAs and schools to give specialist help in ordinary 'mainstream' schools, often referred to as 'inclusion'.

When Ofsted inspected us in 2003, they said SEN was one of the Council's strengths but we have not been complacent. During the autumn term 2006 the inspectors will be back to see how we have changed, our plans to meet the changing needs of Kingston children and how the plan will increase future choice for parents.

- We are including more children in their local schools. We are developing teachers' expertise, working with others e.g. Speech & Language Therapists and we have put new resources in our schools.
- We have made some changes to our three Special Schools so that we can meet the needs of pupils with autism and young people aged 16-19. We need to make sure our plans become action and make the best use of the schools' expertise.
- We want to educate more children locally although we recognise there will continue to be a very small number of children whose needs are so severe and complex that we will need to make arrangements for them outside of Kingston.
- We want to improve the educational opportunities for pupils with SEN and keep costs reasonable. Getting the best value for money is still a challenge.
- We want to make sure we have listened to the views of young people and taken on board the things they tell us along the way.

Children and Young People's Plan

In 2006, the Council and its partners published a plan for Children and Young People aimed at making life better between now and 2010. Children with learning difficulties are at the heart of the plan.

The top priorities are to:

- improve achievement and close the gap between pupils of all abilities
- make things fairer and change inequality
- give help earlier and try to prevent problems occurring
- help the most vulnerable children and families
- improve the health and well-being of disabled children.

The Local Authority's SEN Policy explained

Summary of what the LA wants to achieve (Policy Objectives)

- Work with Parents
- High quality teaching
- Inclusion
- Help when problems occur (Early Intervention)
- Fairness
- Pupil Progress
- Choice
- Flexibility
- Value for money

Definition of Special Educational Needs

To help us to define what we mean by special educational needs, we think of 'special educational needs' as being the things that might cause a barrier or a difficulty and prevent an individual pupil from learning successfully.

The LA believes that pupils with SEN should have access to every opportunity to learn in school and in the community. Parents, teachers and the LA must work together to reduce the barriers to learning for pupils with SEN. In Kingston, pupils with special educational needs should be educated in mainstream schools unless there are convincing reasons for doing otherwise.

Vision and Principles

The key principles on which the Local Authority's policy is based are:

- working in partnership with schools, parents and governors
- commitment to high standards
- the best quality learning experiences for all pupils
- equal access and opportunity
- continuous improvement
- value for money

The LA believes that all pupils with special educational needs can make progress and achieve and with the right help, can reach their full potential while at school and continue their learning into adult life.

Access to education is a basic right and this policy recognises the need to end the discrimination and disadvantages individuals suffer which stop them from taking up the opportunities provided by the education system. Inequalities and disadvantages related to race, gender, disability, home background and financial circumstances confront many learners and create barriers to learning and achievement.

The LA believes that all pupils benefit from an approach that recognises each learner may be at a different stage of emotional, social, physical, personal and intellectual growth, and therefore he or she requires his/her chances to learn to be adapted within the same curriculum.

The LA's provision for pupils with special educational needs will mean that:

- a child with special educational needs should have his/her needs met
- the needs of children will normally be met in mainstream schools
- the views of the child are important
- parents have an important role to play in supporting their child's education
- children with special educational needs should have the same opportunity to follow a broad, balanced and relevant education, including the National Curriculum

To make the policy successful, the Local Authority will need to work with:

- schools
- pupils
- parents
- Health and Community Services

How will schools be involved?

All schools should admit children with special educational needs as well as identifying and providing for children not previously identified as having SEN. Schools are responsible for involving parents in decisions about their child's individual special educational needs, reporting on the steps taken and their progress.

All staff should be involved in developing the school SEN policy, identifying and making SEN provision as well as monitoring in line with the Code of Practice. The Headteacher has responsibility for the management of all aspects of the school's work, for keeping the Governing Body fully informed about SEN provision and pupils' progress and working closely with the school's SEN co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO has responsibility for day-to-day operation of the SEN policy, working closely with the Headteacher and other colleagues to co-ordinate provision for pupils with SEN.

How will pupils be involved?

Pupils with SEN should be taught in a system which values them as full members, giving them equal access to the curriculum. Pupils are entitled to different or additional support and to learn in classrooms where the staff are aware of their needs and take action to support them and reduce their barriers to learning.

Where possible pupils should join in making all decisions which affect them, including the learning targets, choosing which school they will attend, annual reviews and planning for their move to the world of work or further study, known as 'transition'. Pupils should be encouraged to take as much responsibility as possible for their own learning.

How will parents be involved?

Partnership with parents is essential if there is to be good co-operation between schools, parents and others. The LA realises that parents may need help to get involved in their children's education, to know what they can expect for their child with SEN, to make their own views known and have access to information, advice and support during any decision-making about SEN provision.

Parents have a responsibility to work with the school in planning the educational programme for their child and in contributing to the statutory assessment process and the school's annual review of his or her progress. Parents should expect the school to encourage them in this partnership. Parents also have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly.

Parents are entitled to regular information regarding their child's progress and individual needs, and to support from the school and the LA in the procedures for making provision for their child's special educational needs.

Parents should be encouraged and supported in making a contribution to their child's statutory assessment, have their preferences considered and be assisted in advocating their child's needs. Parents should also be closely involved in the annual review, if their child has a statement.

Parents should ensure that all appointments made relating to the statutory assessment are kept.

How will other departments and services be involved?

The LA understands that children will make the best progress if everyone is working together. No one agency will be able to do it all without help from the others. In Kingston, representatives of Education, Social Services, voluntary organisations and Health Services are working to ensure our services are increasingly 'joined up' at the point parents need to access them.

The Government's Strategy: Removing Barriers to Achievement

In February 2004, Central Government launched its Strategy for SEN. Building on the proposals to improve children's services in *Every Child Matters*, the strategy contains four themes for improvement and action at national and local level:

1. **Early Intervention** – children receiving help as soon as possible and suitable childcare
2. **Removing barriers to learning and participation** – in every school and pre-school
3. **Raising expectations and achievement** – focus on progress, developing teachers' skills
4. **Delivering improvements in partnership** – giving parents confidence about education

Representatives from Kingston were invited to the Government's launch in London. The launch, which was one in a series of national events, included a video of children and young people with SEN talking about their hopes for the future if they are given the opportunity to succeed. Pupils from St Philip's Special School and Coombe Girls' School were amongst only five schools across the whole country chosen to be part of the Government video.

What help is available in schools?

More help for pupils with the greatest difficulty: a graduated response

One of the main points of recent legislation and the SEN Code is early intervention through a graduated response. This means more help for pupils with the greatest difficulty and less help as things improve.

Schools often have the skills and the delegated resources to be able to meet most pupils' needs themselves. The LA believes that continuing to build the skills of teachers, and increasing delegation of resources to schools will increase the capacity of local schools to meet a wider range of SEN. This leaves the LA to make provision through a Statement for a much smaller group of children, typically those with severe and complex needs.

School Action and School Action Plus

The SEN policy's important goals include finding out what help is needed and to make sure the school can give the child support in class. This is known as School Action. When it becomes necessary to do something different from and extra to what has been already done, this is known as School Action Plus. It is usual for the school to involve specialists from outside of the school when they are giving help to pupils at School Action Plus. To achieve the goal of supporting pupils in their classrooms, the LA and schools use written, practical advice (known as criteria – see below) to identify pupils' needs, make decisions about the appropriate level of graduated response for individual pupils, agree the most effective support strategies and review progress.

Each individual school uses its resources differently to put in place support for its pupils at School Action and School Action Plus. Here are some examples of help which might be available:

- targets written by the classteacher with specialist and parent involvement
- Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) involved in assessing and planning
- increasing differentiation
- greater input from the classteacher and teaching assistants
- regular planned support from classteacher, teaching assistants and the SENCO
- flexible group work to support IEP targets
- very small groups for literacy and numeracy
- social skills groups
- access to computers and specialist materials and equipment
- opportunities to become independent and feel positive
- external specialist advice e.g. Educational Psychologist, Specialist Teacher for Behaviour and/or Speech & Language
- a visit to school each term from a Speech and Language Therapist
- 'Jump Ahead' motor skills programme
- regular reviews of progress

See also Provision Maps (below).

The Parent Partnership Service and the DfES produce more information about School Action and School Action Plus. We can send you copies on request and it is also available online at www.teachernet.gov.uk/doc/3755/Parents%20Guide.pdf

Giving help at an early stage usually means there will be fewer children whose needs cannot be met at School Action Plus and needing a statutory assessment by the LA. For pupils with the greatest level of need, the assessment may show that it is necessary for the LA to issue a Statement of SEN. Reducing the need for a Statement is generally assumed to be 'good practice', because it means that support can be targeted early without the need to go through a long, bureaucratic process.

Research by the Government watchdog, The Audit Commission, has shown that Statements fulfil 3 roles:

1. Providing a detailed assessment of a child's needs.
2. Allocating resources to meet those needs.
3. Providing assurance to parents.

We believe that in most cases in Kingston, we can fulfil these roles without the need for a Statement (details of Statements are given on page 25).

We agree with the research that shows statutory assessment is a costly, lengthy and bureaucratic process, which many parents find stressful. We know that many schools report it fails to support inclusive practice. We are making some changes to ensure that the right support is given to each child at the time when they need it, and if this happens, then a Statement for a pupil in a mainstream school will rarely be required.

School Action Plus – Kingston 'Enhanced Action Plus'

During the summer term 2004, the LA introduced funding for schools to support children at School Action Plus, at the point when statutory assessment would usually be agreed. This has enabled schools to enhance the provision they already make at School Action Plus. This does not affect parents' statutory rights.

Many schools have been able to use the additional funding from the LA to give a greater level of help to small groups of children, in many cases by investing in specialist training for their staff, which will mean that future groups of children also benefit.

It is very important that you, as parents, have confidence in this arrangement and can therefore agree to support the steps the school is taking in working with the LA to improve the support for your child. Only by working together can we ensure that the changes being made really do work most effectively to meet your child's needs. If we believe that your child's needs cannot be met from within the resources normally available to schools in Kingston, then we will write to you to suggest a statutory assessment.

How will I know my child is improving?

Targets for Individual Pupils

All children with SEN have written targets, usually known as IEPs, against which teachers, parents and pupils can see how much progress the pupil is making. For most children these will be part of the teacher's planning and normal arrangements to ensure that the lesson is suited to the pace at which each individual child can learn. This is known as differentiation.

With an increase on personalising learning for each pupil, it will become common for schools to involve pupils in setting targets for themselves.

Pupils in Kingston schools have been experiencing setting targets through the use of 'I can' statements, e.g. in History:

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Level 1: | I can put things in the order in which they happened. |
| Level 2: | I can ask simple questions about the past. |
| Level 3: | I can suggest why things may have changed in the past. |

IEPS - Individual Education Plans and Provision Maps

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

The IEP is a written record of 3 or 4 improvement targets, which sets out:

- what the pupil needs to learn
- how the pupil will receive extra help e.g. by whom and how often
- how long the targets will be in place and the date when progress will be measured

You may notice the targets being called SMART targets, this means that they should be addressing a particular problem and that it will be clear from the target how the progress will be measured e.g. By the end of term, John will be able to...

IEPs are a 'tool' for planning, teaching and reviewing. They are not unique to Kingston schools; they have been in place for many years. Each IEP reflects the contributions from everyone involved in supporting the pupil, including the pupil, parents, support staff, class teacher and, where necessary, external agencies.

IEPs give parents written reassurance that their child's needs are being addressed individually. Because the IEP review is an acknowledgement of how much progress the pupil is making, parents, teachers, and pupils can be confident about planned support and what difference it is making, its impact.

IEPs are one method by which schools can plan the additional or different provision for pupils with SEN and record outcomes for individual pupils.

Provision Maps

Kingston schools plan how they use their resources, to target the pupils with the greatest need. They have introduced 'Provision Maps' as a tool to help them set out a summary of the help for pupils with additional needs and show 'at a glance' the range of staffing, specialist programmes and other support.

Provision maps can help reduce paperwork, e.g. for children with common difficulties having help in literacy groups, the school can mark a photocopy for each individual child showing help received rather than rewriting similar information on many IEPs.

Provision maps can be helpful in sharing information between home/school about the support available and involving parents in decisions. A provision map, highlighted to show the help, can quickly demonstrate what exactly is being provided for the individual child. Increasingly, Kingston schools are using a combination of school provision maps and pupil targets as a working document for all teaching and support staff instead of IEPs. Where schools have arrangements to plan individually for all pupils and record progress, IEPs may become unnecessary.

For children with a Statement of SEN, IEPs will be reviewed at least twice a year. One review will usually be at a short meeting with the class teacher and/or SENCO whilst the other, probably a more formal meeting, will be the Annual Review. These reviews may be included in the general parent-teacher meetings.

Guidelines and Criteria for School Action and School Action Plus

To have evenness for pupils with SEN across schools, the LA and schools have written examples of children's needs, how schools help and when things are not going to plan. These good practice examples are known as "the criteria". Criteria are used to ensure fairness when deciding which children are at School Action, when to move to School Action Plus and whether the difficulties are so severe that the LA should assess them.

Schools use the criteria to identify when children should be on their SEN registers. The LA uses the criteria to ensure all children with similar difficulties are helped, whichever school they attend. Schools also use criteria to help them know when to move to School Action Plus. The LA uses the criteria to decide which children need to have a detailed statutory assessment.

Criteria do not guarantee an assessment or particular help e.g. when the LA is making a decision about whether to carry out an assessment, a panel of experts will ask lots of questions about why an assessment is needed and why it can help:

- what the child has achieved (the significance of the pupil's achievements)
- what difference the help given has made (the impact of intervention over time)
- what help (provision) is likely to be needed in addition to help already available

London-wide criteria have been developed by Councils working together. They show that 5% of all children in Year 6 are working at National Curriculum Level 2, towards Level 3. They are described as working at School Action Plus. All Kingston schools have been using the London criteria since September 2005.

How can I help my child?

The Parent Centre has been set up by the DfES as an on-line resource for all parents and carers who want to help their child or children to learn. It offers support, information and advice. In general, whatever the problem, it is likely that you will be able to find at least some advice and, at best, some specific support. Just about every disability or condition that affects a child has a support group. This section should get you started in your search for answers. www.parentcentre.gov.uk

10 things the Government says you can do to help your child learn:

1. Give your child confidence through lots of praise and encouragement. As a parent, you have tremendous power to strengthen your child's confidence - and confidence is vital to learning, try a particular aspect of their work ("I like the way you have"....). Some people argue that children - perhaps all of us - need ten-times as much praise as criticism!
2. Read to, and with, your child as much as possible. Hear them read, or encourage them to read to themselves, for at least 20 minutes a day.
3. Encourage children to look and talk about things around them. Even young children can be helped to read signs and understand what they mean.
4. Make use of your local library. Look out for special events for children.
5. Visit museums and places you think your child might find interesting. Children now have free admission to major museums and art galleries.
6. If your children like watching television, watch it with them sometimes. Encourage them to talk about what they have seen.
7. Try to set time aside to do "homework" activities with young children. Schools won't mind if other members of the family join in too!
8. Wherever possible, try to provide a reasonably quiet place for children to do homework (or help them to find somewhere it can be done).
9. Encourage your child to discuss homework with you, including feedback from teachers. Practise helping without taking over!
10. Try to help your child to see the enjoyable aspects of homework!

Your child or children will enjoy school more if they have had a good night's sleep, they arrive at school on time and their attendance is regular.

Support and build a good relationship with your child's school.

If you have any worries or concerns, discuss them with your child's class teacher.

What happens when pupils meet their targets?

It is important for all adults involved in a child's education to recognise when children are making progress. Each review meeting to look at the progress against individual targets is an opportunity to celebrate success.

As parents, you will want to be involved in recognising progress and celebrating your child's successes. You will be more aware than anyone else how important it is to your child to know that she or he is doing well.

Each school will have its own way of recognising effort and attainment, individually and as part of a team. This may include stickers, certificates or assemblies to record performance. Find out what happens in your child's class if you do not already know.

The Code of Practice uses the phrase 'adequate progress' to describe when children's learning needs are being met. It sets out that a child is making adequate progress when the pupil is able to match or increase their own previous rate of progress, when the gap between them and the rest of the class reduces, or in some cases, does not grow larger. It also describes progress where the child's behaviour, self-help or personal skills improve.

Pupils who make good progress at School Action may no longer need to be on the school's SEN register. Pupils who make good progress when they are working at School Action Plus will probably need less help, less often. Their progress will still be measured to make sure they continue to succeed. They are likely to be 'moved' on the register to School Action.

Does the LA listen to pupils' views? Yes!

It is very important that the pupils are involved in making decisions that affect them. This may be in setting targets, choosing a school or identifying their difficulties. For some pupils with a Statement it will involve the pupil giving his/her views as part of an annual review or when he/she reaches age 14, to making plans for the future.

Pupils should be invited to share their feelings and make suggestions about possible solutions to their difficulties. Involving pupils is a two way process that begins with an open mind about what they can contribute.

Schools will have a range of ways in which they involve pupils, depending on the age and ability of the pupils. In all schools it will begin with a whole school approach to pupil involvement e.g. Home/School contact books, School Councils, Healthy Schools and staff involvement in support. Arrangements will be in place to build the pupils' confidence to contribute. Some schools will be further forward with producing copies of reports, which can be understood by pupils although all schools will be continuing to improve when, what and how they involve pupils.

Connexions is a youth support service providing advice, information and personal development for all 13-19 year olds. Connexions Personal Advisers are professionals to whom young people can turn for help. Connexions South London also has a website for young people living in the area:

www.connexions-southlondon.org.uk

Who should I contact in the Local Authority?

Assessment and Support for Learning Service

This service has two teams:

1. The Statutory Assessment Team is responsible for the smooth running of the administration of the things the LA must do for pupils with SEN, particularly arranging assessment, preparing Statements of SEN, finding school placements for children with a Statement and ensuring that each pupil has an Annual Review. These are the LA's duties under the Education Act 1996.
2. Support for Learning is the team which will usually represent the LA to discuss progress at the Annual Review meeting of pupils who are subject to a Statement. It is the monitoring part of the Service but it also provides advice and support to teachers in schools.

Head of Assessment and Support for Learning Service:

Julie Ely Tel: 020 8547 5269 E-mail: julie.ely@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Statutory Assessment Team Manager:

Linda Walsh Tel: 020 8547 5254 E-mail: linda.walsh@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Support for Learning Team Manager:

Debby DaSilva Tel: 020 8547 5265 E-mail: debby.dasilva@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Statutory Assessment Team

Assessments, where necessary, are arranged in accordance with the requirements of the Education Act 1996 working to the timetable specified in the SEN Code of Practice.

Each school has an allocated caseworker who is available to discuss with schools and parents the statutory assessment procedure, the progress of specific cases, Statements and Annual Reviews. Queries regarding specific cases should be directed in the first instance to the Administrative Caseworkers:

Administrative Caseworkers:

Ann Hinshelwood Tel: 020 8547 5266
E-mail: ann.hinshelwood@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Diana Stanley Tel: 020 8547 5230
E-mail: diana.stanley@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Caroline Haynes Tel: 020 8547 5255
E-mail: caroline.haynes@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Administrative Assistants:

Carol Wells Tel: 020 8547 4615
E-mail: carol.wells@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Jean Tagg (part time) Tel: 020 8547 4619
E-mail: jean.tagg@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

The Service also prepares statistical and financial information to support schools and the LA:

Budget Officer:

Alex Cartwright Tel: 020 8547 5261

E-mail: alex.cartwright@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

The Support for Learning Team: Tel: 020 8547 5265

At the Annual Review everyone present will consider the progress the pupil has made and discusses matching the funding to needs. The review will recommend any appropriate changes. Annual Review is an opportunity to celebrate success and maximise the potential for future progress. To help schools with this process the LA is committed to attending as many Annual Reviews as possible.

The Support for Learning Team gives parents guidance on delegated resources and how they are used by schools in the most appropriate way, to meet each pupil's individual needs.

The Support for Learning Team provides advice and training for schools as well as maintaining statistics related to pupils with SEN.

Advisory Teachers:

Support for Learning:

Marie Doyle Tel 020 8547 6674

E-mail: marie.doyle@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Cathy Coma Tel: 020 8547 6673

E-mail: cathy.coma@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Early Years Advisory Teacher with responsibility for SEN:

Lyn Buller Tel: 020 8399 7089

E-mail: lyn.buller@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Speech & Language Service (SALE) Tel: 0208 547 6659/72

This Service also includes 2 Advisory Teachers and 2 Inclusion Assistants:

Advisory Speech & Language Teachers:

Mark Bryant E-mail: mark.bryant@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Hannah Webber E-mail: hannah.webber@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Speech and Language Inclusion Assistants:

Val Edwards E-mail: val.edwards@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Karen Thomson E-mail: karen.thomson@rbk.kingston.gov.uk



Speech and Language Therapists: Tel: 0208 547 6670/71

Sarah Church E-mail: sarah.church@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Cath Lowry E-mail: catharine.lowry@kpct.nhs.uk

Linda Talbot E-mail: linda.talbot@kpct.nhs.uk

Julie Ball E-mail: Julie.ball@kpct.nhs.uk

Sudhasha Konar E-mail: sudhasha.konar@kpct.nys.uk

The Youth, Inclusion and Participation Services (YIPS)

The YIPS supports the inclusion of pupils with behavioural, emotional or social needs (BESN) and learning needs into mainstream school where appropriate and enforces good attendance. YIPS works in close partnership with schools, parents/carers, pupils and other support services and agencies.

Behaviour Support, Learning Support and Speech and Language Support

The YIPS provides support to schools through the provision of teacher or behaviour support worker input to address the needs of individual or groups of pupils. The support is generally for pupils without Statements identified by the schools as requiring specialist input at School Action Plus. Parents' agreement is always sought.

Pupil Support Manager:

David Kinsley Tel: 020 8547 6678

E-mail: david.kinsley@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Co-ordinator for Learning Support:

Chris Tozer Tel: 020 8547 6679

E-mail: chris.tozer@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)

The YIPS has two PRUs – for secondary age pupils who require time out because of their emotional needs (Malden Oaks) or behavioural needs (Mecklenberg). The aims of the PRUs are to reintegrate pupils to mainstream school, special school, and the world of work or further education/training as appropriate. Placement is with the consent of the parent.

Headteacher of PRUs:

Trevor Sykes Tel: 020 8547 6736/6660

Mecklenberg email: mbs@rbksch.org

Malden Oaks email: mos@rbksch.org

Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The EWS, in liaison with other support agencies such as the Educational Psychology Service and Children and Family Services, work on a planned basis with schools, parent/carers and pupils to promote positive attitudes to school attendance and to address any non-attendance issues for pupils of statutory school age. To do this, they develop proactive projects to improve school attendance.

Principal Education Welfare Officer:

Ming Zhang Tel: 020 8547 5243

E-mail: ming.zhang@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

The Educational Psychology Service, Pre-School Support Service and Services for Sensory Impairment

Services Manager:

Principal Educational Psychologist:

Julia Hardy Tel: 020 8547 6699

E-mail: julia.hardy@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Senior Administrative Assistant:

Anne Porter Tel: 020 8547 6699

Administrative Assistant:

Carol Newman Tel: 020 8547 6680

The Educational Psychology Service is a specialist support service, playing a key role in identifying and supporting pre-school children with SEN and young people up to the age of 19.

Psychology is all about understanding ourselves and others, including how we think, feel and behave. It is also about how we learn. Educational Psychologists (EPs) assist schools to have a better understanding of children's development, by working with individuals and groups of children, adults in schools and families.

Each school has an EP. If your child's school believes an EP should become involved, they will discuss this with you. The EPS is strongly committed to early intervention, believing that it best supports schools to achieve change and successful outcomes for children and young people by helping to make things possible.

Pre-School Support Service

The Portage Service helps support the inclusion of young children with special educational needs. It provides Pre-school Support Service and Portage Home Teaching Service.

Pre - School Support Service Co-ordinator:

Ann Macpherson Tel: 020 8547 6698

E-mail: ann.macpherson@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Services for Sensory Impairment

Service Co-ordinator:

Principal Educational Psychologist

Julia Hardy Tel: 020 8547 6699

E-mail: Julia.hardy@rbk.kingston.gov.uk

Teacher for Hearing Impaired (HI):

Beverley Westwood Tel 020 8547 6746 (Ansaphone)

Teacher for Visually Impaired (VI):

Barbara Nixon Tel: 020 8547 6684 (Ansaphone)

Senior Administrative Assistant

Educational Psychology Service, Pre-School Support Service and Service for Sensory Impairment:

Marina Davies Tel: 020 8547 6698

Facsimile number: 020 8439 7794

During term-time the Services for Sensory Impairment teachers may be contacted by telephone on the above numbers: (In an emergency please contact the Senior Administrative Assistant: Marina Davies on 020 8547 6698).

Who can help parents?

Making decisions about your child's education is a worry for all parents, but can seem particularly complex if your child has SEN. Often this is because of the range of people you come into contact with and the 'jargon' they use. But don't despair – there is help, and all the services are committed to improving their practices so that they work most effectively and co-operatively with parents. **The Kingston Parent Partnership Service** has been set up as a source of *impartial* information, advice and support in educational matters, for all parents of children with special educational needs.

Parent Partnership Officer

Mrs Megan Naylor Tel 020 8934 6378

E-mail: megan.naylor@enhanceable.org

Parent Partnership Service can provide leaflets on any of the these:

Keep Talking
Information for parents
Parent Partnership Leaflet
Code of Practice Summary
IEPs
Annual Reviews
Parent Checklist
My child has SEN
Preparing for a review meeting
The role of the SENCO
My right of appeal
What to do when my statement arrives
How do the changes to the Code of Practice affect parents
What to look for when visiting a school
Transfer to Secondary school
Reassessment
Notes in Lieu
Ceasing to maintain a statement
Keep Talking
Info for parents

Other organisations that help pupils and parents:

There are many other organisations that can help pupils with SEN and their families. Some of these are run by local and national charities.

The Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) is an independent advice centre for parents, offering information about education in England for 5-16 year olds. It offers free telephone advice on SEN and many other subjects like exclusion, bullying and admission appeals. General advice: FREEPHONE Tel: 0808 800 5793 (Monday to Friday 2-5pm). Exclusion information: Tel: 020 7704 9822 (to order a free advice pack). Exclusion advice: Tel: 0808 800 0327 to speak to an adviser (Monday to Friday 2-5pm). Website: www.ace-ed.org.uk

Connexions is a youth support service providing advice, information and personal development for all 13-19 year olds.

Website: www.connexions-southlondon.org.uk .

Email: info@connexions-southlondon.org.uk .

See also “What about pupils with a disability?”

What about pupils with a disability?

The LA has revised its SEN policy in light of the SEN & Disability Act 2001 and welcomes the changes, which made it unlawful to discriminate against disabled pupils from September 2002.

The LA's practices for disabled pupils are based on 2 basic approaches:

1. Where there is parental preference for a particular school, to enable the school to meet the needs of an individual pupil, changes will be made to the building (if it is practicable and reasonable) including access to the curriculum through equipment and ICT.
2. Borough wide changes on a planned, phased approach are resulting in improvements which support pupils in their local communities and reduce the journey times of home to school transport. This will increase the choice of schools.

The LA's support services for sensory impairments will continue to provide support and guidance to schools.

From August 2005, there has been an Information Service for Parents of Children and Young People with Disabilities:

Information Service for Disabled Children

Where to Go? What to Do? Who To talk to?

Ask **Caroline Baxter** on Tel: 020 8934 6378
or E-mail: Caroline.Baxter@enhanceable.org

Help available includes:

- how to keep your child amused
- education options
- respite options
- benefits advice
- information on local and national services and organisations

How do schools get their money?

For pupils in a mainstream school subject to a Statement, the provision specified in their Statement means they receive more help than is routinely available for all pupils as a matter of course and is also greater than the extra help already available at School Action/Action Plus. In this way, the Statement makes provision '*as well as*', not '*instead of*'.

Kingston gives funding directly to schools so they can make the additional provision specified within the Statement. This direct funding is known as delegation.

When this system was introduced, the Council distributed its entire budget across all of the pupils and all of its mainstream schools. Each budget share was known as a Matrix unit. Over the 5 years since, each unit has increased in line with inflation and from April 2007, schools know that each unit will be £301.

We work out the number of Matrix units an individual child will get from the reports gathered during the Statutory Assessment and the needs set out in the Statement e.g.

- Younger children may have units for Early Learning but not for Thinking and Problem Solving
- Units for Numeracy, Thinking and Problem Solving are likely to be more appropriate for older pupils
- Children with a Social Communication Disorder would have units in Social Communication and not in Social Skills

Because Matrix funding is **in addition**, the support identified on the funding Matrix is not the maximum help available to an individual child.

Statutory Assessments and Statements

Statutory Assessments

A statutory assessment should take 18 weeks. It is laid down in law who must write a report for the assessment and how long each part of the process should take.

There are a few occasions when the timetable is allowed to be longer, these occasions are called allowable exceptions. Allowable exceptions occur when it is necessary to seek some additional advice because something has changed or perhaps you and your child are away from the area and unable to attend appointments. Although the proportion of cases completed within time has been increasing, reaching a 5-year high in December 2004, and the overall length of any delay has reduced significantly, the late receipt of medical advice from the NHS continues to be a concern. In some cases the doctors have explained to us that they cannot write their reports because parents have not been aware of the importance of attending the appointment they receive or contacting them for an alternative appointment.

In Kingston, in the cases where we receive the medical reports 'on time', we have completed 100% of assessments in 18 weeks.

At the end of the statutory assessment, the LA will have received a number of reports from you and from all of those professionals who are involved with your child. The school will also have provided a report. You will be given copies of all of these reports. We use the reports to tell us whether we should make and maintain a Statement. We may or may not decide to issue a Statement. The vast majority of children will have their needs met in mainstream schools, targets will be in place and the graduated approach to support will provide help. However, for some pupils, the LA will conclude that it is only possible for them to progress if a Statement is issued.

The Department for Education & Skills (DfES) produces a separate guide for parents to explain all of the stages in the statutory assessment procedure and Statements. If you have not already received a copy and you would like one to be sent to you, please let the Statutory Assessment Team know.

Statements

A Statement is a legal document, setting out the extra help and the name of the school at which it will be provided. We always invite parents to tell us what they think of the Statement by sending them a draft 'proposed' statement before we complete it.

Most children with special needs do not need a Statement (only 600 in Kingston) because they will have some extra help in school, known as 'School Action' or 'School Action Plus'. After a Statutory Assessment we know if a Statement is needed.

Each individual Child's Statement will be unique to them. It is based on the reports gathered during their individual assessment.

What a Statement says:

- Part 2 of a Statement describes the child's difficulties and is known as '*the needs*'. It leads to Part 3; the extra help, known as '*the provision*' and to Part 4, the '*school named*', the place where help will be given.
- Where there is a mainstream school named in Part 4, Kingston gives the school an additional, specific amount of funding according to the individual level of need and the help that must be provided.
- The description in Part 3 leaves no room for doubt about what is to be provided; it is not open to interpretation later and cannot be changed without notice and a right of appeal.

Although the details set out in Part 3 can give parents reassurance about the quantity (*input*) their child will receive and is useful in reviewing a child's progress, more importantly for parents are the questions about quality:

- 'Is my child making progress?'
- Does the provision make a difference? (*output*)

All Local Authorities have a strict legal duty to arrange the help described in Part 3 of the statement. When children attend special school, a lower level of detail may be written into Part 3 of the Statement.

Annual Reviews

PARENTS' CONTRIBUTIONS ARE VERY IMPORTANT!

If your child has a Statement of SEN his/her progress will be reviewed at some point during the school year, known as the Annual Review. You will be invited to take part in the review meeting. You will feel most confident about attending these meetings and giving your views if you know what to expect and have prepared for this meeting.

Schools must invite you to the Annual Review and it is important that you attend and contribute your knowledge and experience to these meetings. You will also get the chance to say what you feel is going well or badly. The Annual Review meeting will usually be a longer, possibly more formal meeting than those which are held to discuss IEPs, e.g. other professionals might be present.

The LA produces guidelines intended to help parents make their written contribution to the annual review; an example of this is set out below. If you would like a copy, please ask the school or contact the Administrative Caseworker in the Statutory Assessment Team. Your views will be useful and valued. Parents' written contribution can be in any format and can be as short or long as you feel necessary.

WHAT IS YOUR CHILD LIKE NOW?

GENERAL HEALTH - Eating and sleeping habits, self-care? Well-being, medicines?
LEISURE - What does your child do outside of school?
FAMILY AND FRIENDS - How does your child get on with parents, brothers, sisters, other adults in the family, other children, friends?
BEHAVIOUR - Is your child moody, difficult or happy, helpful, affectionate?
DOES YOUR CHILD ENJOY SCHOOL? - What do you think is going well at school? How has your child improved?
WHAT DOES YOUR CHILD FIND EASY/HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH?
HAVE YOUR CHILD'S DIFFICULTIES CHANGED?
DOES YOUR CHILD WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING IN SCHOOL?
HOW DO YOU THINK THE HELP GIVEN COULD BE CHANGED/ IMPROVED?
DO YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR WORRIES OR CONCERNS?
IS THERE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT EVENTS OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL, WHICH MAY HAVE AFFECTED YOUR CHILD?

The Parent Partnership Service (PPS) produces a leaflet which covers some practical arrangements, some preparation issues and a list of questions that you might like to ask yourself before the meeting. The PPS may also be able to put you in touch with other groups or organisations that will offer to help you.

After the Annual Review meeting

The Annual Review meeting, whilst very important in its own right, is not the end of the review process. The procedure that schools need to follow after the Annual Review is as follows:

- The school will prepare a final review report giving a summary of the following:
 1. A school's assessment of the main issues discussed at the meeting
 2. Recommendations about educational targets for the coming year
 3. Any other steps that should be taken, including whether the Statement should be amended maintained or ceased. The school should also give reasons for any recommendations. If there are any areas of disagreements, they will need to be recorded.

This report will be a summary of outcomes NOT a verbatim record of discussions held.

- the report will be circulated to all those concerned with the Annual Review including parents/carers (even if you did not attend)
- the school will send the agreed final review report to the LA, for the attention of the Administrative Caseworker, Assessment & Support for Learning Service, within 10 working (school) days, or the end of term, whichever is the sooner
- the LA will then consider the Annual Review report, discuss any recommendations for change and decide whether those changes (such as amending the Statement or beginning a reassessment) are necessary
- the LA will then advise all those concerned with the Annual Review of their decisions
- if no changes to the Statement are needed, the Annual Review Report will be held as part of your child's record
- if they are needed, the LA will undertake any amendments to the Statement or will begin a reassessment

An amendment or a reassessment will only usually be made in cases where very significant changes have occurred or considerable alterations to the Statement are necessary

- changes in your child's needs may be reflected in the funding attached to the Statement and the LA will monitor this

Annual Reviews are a vital element of the support provided for your child at school and the discussions held at reviews are a valuable opportunity for you to get together with the school and discuss what has happened over the past year and plan for the next year. However, not all of this discussion is needed for the Annual Review report, which is intended as a summary of outcomes only.

What about changing school?

When a pupil with a Statement needs to change schools, it is discussed at the Annual Review and a recommendation sent to the LA. The meeting will make sure the LA and the new school has plenty of time to make arrangements for help to be in place and the pupil's transfer goes smoothly. An amended Statement will be issued.

Secondary school transfer

When the pupil with a Statement is due to move with pupils of the same age to the next school at the beginning of the academic year, the review will be held in the summer term of Year 5, (or, at the very latest, the start of the autumn term Year 6). Some parents know which school they prefer because of a family link, or perhaps a local church. At the review there will be a discussion about the changes and parents/carers will be asked to name a preferred secondary school placement. If you know the school you would prefer this will be noted on the Annual Review report.

Do not worry if you don't have a preference at the time of the meeting, you can let the Administrative Caseworker know, when you have decided. A letter will be sent to you about this during the summer before the year of transfer.

Early in the autumn term, the LA Administrative Caseworker will consult your preferred school. This has to be done under Schedule 27 of the Education Act 1996, following strict guidelines and time scales. The LA will be working towards issuing a new proposed Statement to confirm the secondary school place **by February 15th during the year of transfer**. The Caseworker will write to the new school and keep parents informed about progress towards confirming the school place.

(Similar procedures apply to other transition stages).

Staying on after 16

Further education is available for all young people over the age of 16. Your child can choose to stay on at school or move to a college. Every Annual Review of the Statement, from Year 9, will discuss these choices for post 16, known as Transition Planning.

If your child with a Statement wants to continue studying outside of school a Personal Adviser from the Connexions Service will assess the education/training help they will need. (Connexions is a youth support service providing advice, information and personal development for all 13-19 year olds). Like schools, all colleges have SENCOs and can offer help. You can contact the Connexions Service and your child's school if you have questions about Post 16 options. Connexions South London also has a website for young people: www.connexions-southlondon.org.uk

The Statement will lapse automatically when your child leaves school.

Getting to and from School (Transport assistance)

Most children are able to get to and from school by walking, cycling or using public transport. In some cases, children may share car journeys with friends and family. However, a small number of children will be unable to make this journey without some help, and the LA may provide transport assistance if necessary.

There is no legal requirement for the LA to offer assistance unless a child lives over a minimum distance from their *nearest suitable school*. For Kingston residents the following distances apply: Over 2 miles from primary school (ages 5 – 11); over 3 miles from secondary school (ages 11-16).

The nearest suitable school will not always be the school which you have stated as your preference.

The LA has a policy for transport assistance and as part of this will look at the distance from school as well as each pupil's individual special educational or medical needs. Further guidance on transport assistance is available from the Contracts Officer Tel: 020 8547 5304.

Schools in Kingston

All schools in Kingston help children with SEN. We produce booklets giving details of each school in Kingston. Copies can be obtained from the Kingston Admissions Team on 020 8547 4610 or by e-mail to school.admissions@rbk.kingston.gov.uk.

Schools with specialist areas (or *are being developed during 2006/07):

For Moderate to Severe Learning difficulties, at

*Tolworth Infants' School, School Lane, Tolworth, Tel: 020 8399 4231

For Speech & Language difficulties, at

Castle Hill School, Buckland Road, Chessington , Tel: 020 8397 3951

The Local Authority is also able to offer similar resources in all junior classes for pupils with speech and language difficulties.

For Autistic Spectrum Disorders, at

Surbiton Children's Centre (Nursery), Alpha Road, Surbiton, Tel: 020 8390 2555.

The Mount Primary School, Dickerage Lane, New Malden, Tel: 020 8942 5154

*Knollmead Primary School, Knollmead, Surbiton, Tel: 020 8337 3778

*Latchmere School, Latchmere Road, Kingston, Tel: 020 8546 7181

*Grand Avenue Primary School, Grand Avenue, Surbiton, Tel: 020 8399 5344

*Fern Hill Primary School, Richmond Road, Kingston, Tel: 020 8247 0300

For Social and Emotional needs, at

*Malden Manor Primary School, Lawrence Avenue, New Malden, Tel: 020 8337 9620

For Hearing Impairments, at

Knollmead Primary School, Knollmead, Tolworth, Tel: 020 8337 3778,

Special Schools:

Bedelsford School, Grange Road, Kingston , KT1 2QZ

Tel: 020 8546 9838, 020 8547 6195, Fax: 020 8296 9238, E-mail BDS@rbksch.org

For pupils aged between 3 and 16 with physical difficulties and profound & multiple learning difficulties (PMLD).

Dysart School, 190 Ewell Road, Surbiton, KT6 6HL

Tel: 020 8412 2600, Fax: 020 8412 2700, E-mail DYS@rbksch.org

For pupils aged between 5 and 19 with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties/autistic spectrum disorder.

St. Philip's School, Harrow Close, Chessington, KT9 2HR

Tel: 020 8397 2672, Fax: 020 8739 1969, E-mail PHS@rbksch.org

For pupils aged 11 to 19 (purpose built Post 16 provision from September 2006) with moderate to severe learning difficulties and specialist resources for autistic spectrum disorder.

Schools outside Kingston

In very rare cases, there are no suitable schools in Kingston or perhaps the pupil requires a boarding school. If this is the case for your child, we will let you know and we will discuss with you what choices exist. If the provision named on your child's Statement is made outside of Kingston, we will usually meet the education costs. We will provide you with some assistance towards travel (in line with the arrangements for school travel). The Secretary of approves independent and non-maintained schools as suitable for pupils with SEN. The LA always sends out details of DfES approved schools when a proposed Statement is issued.

What do all the abbreviations mean?

Some abbreviations are used so frequently that it feels like you should just know what they all mean. Often this makes people avoid asking people to explain them.

Don't sit there in silence – always ask!

Professionals never mind explaining what they meant; many will apologise for using unnecessary jargon.

ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act 1995
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
IBP	Individual Behaviour Plan
IEP	Individual Education Plan
KS	Key Stage
LA	Local Authority
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
NHS	National Health Service
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PPS	Parent Partnership Service
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSP	Pastoral Support Plan
RBK	Royal Borough of Kingston
SAAG	Statutory Assessment Advisory Group
SALEP	Speech and Language Education Placements
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy
SAP	Statutory Assessment Panel
SCEP	Social Communication Education Placements
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	SEN Co-ordinator
SENDIST	SEN & Disability Tribunal
SfL	Support for Learning Team
TA	Teaching Assistant

Not all of these abbreviations have been used in this booklet.

How well is the Local Authority doing?

We have a target to achieve 100% of our assessments within the statutory time scales when we receive reports on time and we are achieving this. We also have a target to increase the proportion of children who go to mainstream schools.

We aim to be helpful and efficient but we know there are times when people are not happy with the service they have received. It is not always possible to meet expectations of what can be done, particularly when a type of school or provision is not available locally. We will attempt to explain any decision that may have come as a disappointment to you. We will be willing to go to conciliation. Conciliation is a chance for both of us to get together with a mediator (see below for details), if you want us to. We will give you details of your right to appeal, the time to make your appeal and where to send your appeal form.

In the event that you are unhappy with the services we provide, we ask you initially to discuss it with the relevant member of Assessment & Support for Learning Service and if after doing so, you remain dissatisfied, the matter can be referred for consideration to the Team Manager. We will respond to your complaint within 10 working days.

Complaints of a particularly serious nature will also be referred to the Head of Assessment & Support for Learning Service or to the Directorate Head of Learning and School Effectiveness.

Conciliation

If you are unhappy with any decisions the LA has made you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal. We will **always tell you** when you have a right to appeal against a decision we have made, however you also have the right to 'conciliation', some times referred to as 'Dispute Resolution' or 'Mediation'. It can take place while you are waiting for an appeal hearing (usually 4 months). You can ask us to arrange for a conciliation meeting, organised by an independent mediator.

The mediator is an independent person who is trained in working with people in disagreement to help them talk and solve their problems.

Parents sometimes find they are in disagreement:

- over a request for an assessment
- the description of their child's needs
- the way help is given
- or the school their child should go to

Of course the Parent Partnership Service can help parents with issues like these but sometimes it can be useful for someone completely new to the case to help the parties to talk. Using a mediator doesn't always end in all round agreement and if it doesn't work, it doesn't affect your right to appeal in any way.

In some cases it is also possible to arrange conciliation when your child's school, not the LA, has made the decision.

For further details ask the Parent Partnership Service or the Administrative Caseworker.

The Local Government Ombudsman

The Local Government Ombudsman can also investigate certain types of complaints about how the Council has dealt with the assessment and provision.

The Ombudsman is based at:
21 Queen Anne's Gate
London
SW1

It is always useful to know how we are doing.

We welcome parents' compliments and complaints about the services that they received from us, because this will help us to improve.

Some of the ways we currently work have been developed thanks to the feedback from parents.

Please use the following questionnaire to send us your views.

Please tell us what you think of our Services:

(tick the box which applies most)



1. Did you find it easy to contact us?

By Phone			
By email			
In person			
In writing			

2. Did we answer your question/dealt with you promptly?

3. Did you receive enough information about:-

The Assessment Schools we suggested			
Annual Review			

4. Do you think SEN services are better or worse than those outside of Kingston?

What did we get right? Is there anything we should NOT change? _____

What could we do better? _____

Thank you for your comments

Please return to: Julie Ely,
 Head of Assessment and Support for Learning Service
 Royal Borough of Kingston
 Guildhall 2 Kingston KT1 1EU

E-mail: julie.ely@rbk.kingston.gov.uk