

Carers Information Sheet 20

Carers of Disabled Children and/or a Child with Special Educational Needs

This leaflet contains additional information for parents of children with special needs. We outline some of the issues of relevance to parents and how to access the support and services you may need. This leaflet also contains information about key organisations in Lewisham that work with children with special needs and their families. Carers Lewisham provides support services for all carers, including parents or other family carers of children with disabilities.

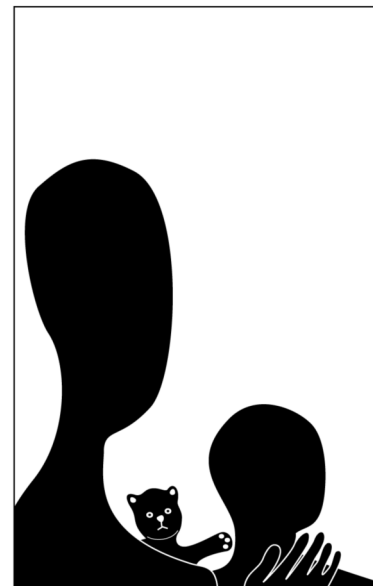
Pre schools/schools can provide a lot of help from their own resources for children with special educational needs. Some children with more severe or complex needs may need more help than the school can provide. These children may need a statutory assessment to establish what their difficulties are. This may lead to a statement of special educational needs which will set out all the help a child must have. Statutory assessments and statements are the responsibility of the local authority where you live.

STATUTORY ASSESSMENTS AND STATEMENTS OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

An Assessment is undertaken by professionals for Lewisham Education Department to determine what a child's **special educational needs** are, and what help will be required to meet those needs. Parents' knowledge & views are an essential part of this process. When the assessment is complete, children should have a written 'statement' and education plan, to be regularly reviewed.

Who can request an Assessment?

Parents, care workers, schools and pre-schools



can request a Statutory Assessment if the child has substantial educational / learning difficulties.

How can a parent request an Assessment?

A parent should first discuss their concerns with the school or pre school. If these concerns continue, a parent can contact:

Special Educational Needs

Laurence House, Catford Road, SE6 4SW

Tel: **020 8314 7453**

email: sen@lewisham.gov.uk

Assessment Process

The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) takes lead responsibility for gathering information and for coordinating the child's special educational provision, working with the child's teachers. The assessment takes into account the child's educational, medical, nursing, social and other needs, and the information is carefully coordi-

nated so that a judgement can be made as to whether or not a statement of special educational needs should be issued.

A panel of professionals usually including headteachers, an educational psychologist, and representatives from health and social services, confirms whether or not the statement should be issued.

What is a Statement?

A statement of special educational needs is a legal document laying out the details of special needs which your child is considered to have after the assessment above.

The statement outlines the extra educational provision which will be made available to meet your child's needs. This is called special educational provision. A statement of special educational needs is set out in parts, including:

Part two - Special Educational Needs

Details of each and every one of the child's special educational needs, as identified by the Local Educational Authority (LEA) from the advice received. They are attached as appendices to the statement.

Part three - Special Educational Provision

- The special educational provision which the LEA considers necessary to meet the child's special educational needs.
- The objectives which the special educational provision should aim to meet.
- The provision considered appropriate to meet these needs and objectives are put together in an individual education plan (IEP), which is reviewed after a period of time to see if the plan is working.
- The arrangements for monitoring progress in meeting those objectives, particularly for setting short-term targets for the child's progress on a regular basis.

Part four - Placement

The type and name of school where the special

educational provision specified in part three is to be made; or, the arrangements for the education to be made otherwise than in school. In most cases, provision will be made (at different levels) in a "mainstream" school. Rarely will a boarding school at a distance be proposed.

What happens next?

If it has been decided to issue a 'statement of special educational needs', then you will first be sent a 'proposed statement'. All sections will be completed except part four (describing the type and name of the school) which is left blank. Along with the copy of the proposed statement, you will receive a letter from the education service explaining how you can give your views before a final statement is issued.

You will have 15 days in which to make any comments and express your preference of school you want for your child. You must read the document carefully to ensure the description of needs and the services to meet those needs are clear. If not, ask for a meeting to discuss the revision of the statement.

Usually Lewisham will send you the final statement within eight weeks of issuing the proposed statement. An assessment should take no longer than six months. (There are exceptions to this time limit, such as when professional advice is received late). You will be informed of your right of appeal against the authority's decision to an Independent Special Needs Tribunal, if you do not agree with the final statement issued by the Authority.

Special Education Tribunals / appeals

Tel. **028 9072 8757**

Email: sendtribunal@courtsni.gov.uk

Independent Panel of Special Education Advisers (IPSEA)

Information & legal advice especially appeals on statements of special educational need.

Tel. **0800 018 4016** www.ipsea.org.uk

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

Advice line: **0808 800 5793**

WWW.ace-ed.org.uk

Once the statement is agreed, teachers and the SENCO are supported by specialists from outside the school in carrying out the special educational provision - if in the statement. These could be members of the education psychology service or learning support service, medical professionals and/or social services professionals. The IEP should be regularly monitored by the school, and formally reviewed at least once a year.

SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

If your child, you as their carer, or the whole family, need practical help and support including breaks from caring, help in the home, etc., you will need to approach the Council's

Children with Disabilities Service

Kaleidoscope Children's Centre,

32 Rushey Green, SE6 4JF

Tel: **020 7138 1272 / 5**

NB The **main tel. no. at Kaleidoscope** for other services is **020 7138 1100**

You can have a Children in Need Assessment to see if you meet the service's Eligibility Criteria. (Please note that not all children who have a Statement are entitled to social care services, just the assessment).

The assessment should include consideration of the family's overall circumstances; your level of support from relatives and friends; and highlight any stress factors / problems in your case.

However the Disabilities Service may only arrange support for children & families with "severe" disabilities; they generally, for example, cannot help those with "stand-alone" behavioural or emotional difficulties. Families excluded from this service can instead contact the main Children's Social Services.

Referral & Assessment Team

Laurence House, 1 Catford Rd. SE6 4RU

Tel. **020 8314 6294/ 3852/3786**

If you meet the Children with Disabilities eligibility criteria, you are then entitled to a **Family Support Assessment**. This will give you a number of points, which can be translated into a range of services - such as **House on the Hill** overnight respite; **Coombe House / Ravensbourne Project** day care; or other regular respite services. NB if your child is aged under 8 (or at boarding school) you are only entitled to half the usual points, which translates into fewer services.

If your non disabled child/ren have to help out more than is usual at home, and you are in anyway concerned about the impact on them of having a severely disabled sibling - e.g. they are being bullied at school, have worries about bringing friends home, or are often worried about their family - they may use the support services provided by the **Carers Lewisham Young Carers Project**. See in "Useful Contacts" further on in this Information Sheet for details.

TRANSITION

The move from Child to Adult Services

For parents of children with special needs, the "transition" period is often a worrying time; your child is growing up, and you have concerns about what their future might hold. When a teenager, they may well need to be assessed for independence support into adulthood. Planning for this transition has 4 elements: Education, Training & Work Opportunities, which are explored through Connexions, who provide an information & guidance service to ALL vulnerable young people aged 13 - 19.

Lewisham High St., SE13 6LY

Tel. **8297 3330 209-211**

Community Support, through Social Care Services

Health Issues, through health professionals in schools.

Social and Leisure opportunities, through local youth and voluntary sector groups.

Transition Planning

For children with with a statement, planning should start at Year 9 when Children Services and the Transitions team are involved in school reviews. Adult social services are involved in school reviews from Year 11.

In addition there are also termly meetings between Adult and Children's services to identify young people coming up for transition, and which if any Adult Service may most appropriately meet their needs.

Transitions Liaison Team

Based at Kaleidoscope.

Tel. **7138 1416**

ADULT SOCIAL CARE CRITERIA

To receive help from Social Care Services, the young person must meet the 'eligibility criteria' for the relevant service:

Learning Disability Service

To be able to use the adult Learning Disability Services the young person must have an IQ of less than 70, and either have been born with the disability or acquired it before the age of 5 years.

Capital House, 47 Rushey Green, SE6 4BA.

Tel. **020 8314 8245**

Younger Adult Services

299 Verdant Lane, SE6 1TP

Tel. **020 8314 7766**

The young person must either be in the 'Critical' or 'Substantial' risk to independence categories. Qualifying criteria include:

- Life is or will be threatened
- Significant health problems have developed or will develop
- There is or will be little choice and control over

most aspects of the immediate environment

- Abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur
- There is or will be an inability to carry out most or many personal care or domestic routines
- Involvement in work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained
- Important (1) social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained, or (2) family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.

ISSUES

If your Young Person does not meet the above criteria they may still be entitled to access services in the voluntary sector, education and help with employment issues. Your Young Person's Connexions worker should help to arrange this.

Those parents who have children with high needs may find that after assessment by adult services, less money is available for their Young Person's care package than when they were children. Parents may find that their only option is to go through the Social Services complaints process. Carers Lewisham can help, at least with initial complaints.

It should however be possible for any Direct Payment arrangement (one way of organising & paying for services) to be transferred for the new care package.

Also unfortunately there are some young people who have quite severe difficulties but who do not meet adult social services criteria, such as Asperger's Syndrome, ADHD, mild learning difficulties and some other mental health problems. Again, advice from Carers Lewisham or another independent organisation may help.

SOME USEFUL CONTACTS

Association for Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus

(ASBaH)

Support; home visits to families; regular newsletter; grants, including holidays; holiday bungalow.

Tel: **020 8449 0475** email: lasr@asbah.org

Carers Lewisham

Our services are open to parent / family carers, where a child has a lasting disability / condition.

We support a number of carers' groups; there is a weekly coffee morning at the Centre; we run one-off information and advice workshops on a range of topics of interest to parent carers. Please see other leaflets in our Information Pack and the latest Newsletter for more details.

In addition, parent carers may use our sitting services; holiday grants ("Fix yourself a break"); group holidays; massage and relaxation days; help with financial benefits; advice on negotiating with social services, etc.; 1 to 1 counselling service; lifelong learning classes, etc.

NB Our **Young Carers Project** supports under 18s involved in caring for a family member. We provide Saturday clubs; days/weekends away; support for families; help at school; a homework/afterschool club, possible grants for special individual interests, etc. For more information contact our Young Carers Workers on **020 8699 8686**.

Child & Adolescent Mental Health

(CAMHS - was "Lewisham Park")

Specialist guidance & treatment for under 18s with mental health needs and their families. Referrals via GP, Social Worker or other professional.

Based at Kaleidoscope

Tel: **020 7138 1100**

Child Development Services

(was "Priory Manor")

Specialised assessments and treatment by a multidisciplinary team, including paediatrician, physio / occupational / speech therapists, specialist health visitor. Based at Kaleidoscope

Tel: **020 7138 1100**

Children and Young People

Community Occupational Therapy

Assessment to enable a child to increase their independence at home with equipment, telecare devices (e.g. fall alert) & adaptations. Advice on safe moving and handling, and on rehousing. Any long waiting times for the service may have to be challenged. Based at Kaleidoscope

Tel: **0020 7138 1337**

Contact A Family

Weekly drop-in; individual advice and support; holiday play-schemes & information on other childcare for disabled children; outings for the whole family.

Leemore Central Community

Hob Bonfield Road, SE13 5EU.

Tel: **020 8297 8056**

Email: lewisham@cafamily.org.uk

Coombe House / Ravensbourne Project

Day care & activities for disabled children.

Tel. **020 8695 2661**

Cystic Fibrosis Trust

All round advice and information, practical and emotional support for families with a child suffering from Cystic Fibrosis.

11 London Road, Bromley, Kent, BR1 1BY

Tel: **020 8464 7211**

Family Information Service

Access to Lewisham Portage Project, Lewisham Councils' Early Years Centre for children between 0-5 with special needs; information on all holiday playschemes in the borough.

Laurence House, 1 Catford Rd, SE6 4RU

Tel. **8314 3684 / 0800 085 0606**

House on the Hill

Overnight / short stays for assessed children, to give the family a break.
Slaithwaite Rd. SE13.
Tel. **020 8852 5834**

Lewisham Autism Support

Information, advice, support & workshops for families who have a newly diagnosed child with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.
Based at Lewisham Carers Centre
Tel: **020 8699 3066**

Lewisham Parents Partnership Service

Information and support to parents of children with disabilities, particularly during special education assessments, reviews and appeals (especially in mainstream schools).
3-4 meetings a year, and social events.
Goldsmiths Community Centre, Castillon Rd. SE6 1QD
Tel. **020 8698 7879**

Lewisham Portage Project

Home visiting support & guidance for pre-school children with special needs, helping parents with their care & development, e.g., feeding, safety, creative play. Also groups.
Based at Kaleidoscope
Tel: **020 8691 1777**

Mencap

For carers of & people with a learning disability.
Newsletter, clubs, holiday bungalow, etc.
72 Lee High Rd. SE13 5PT
Tel: **020 8852 4100**

Advice on disability / "discretionary" trusts:

Tel. **020 7696 6996**
willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk

Parentlineplus

National 24-hour helpline for stressed parents.
Tel. **0808 800 2222**
Email: familylives.org.uk

Parents Support Group

Helpline, counselling & support
Tel. **020 8469 0205**
www.psg.org.uk

Sickle Cell Society

Information & support for parents & carers.
Tel Regional Care Office South London.
020 7635 9328

SIGNAL

Meetings, information & mutual support for parents / carers of children & young adults diagnosed as coming within the autistic spectrum or with Asperger's Syndrome.
Tel: **020 8314 6536**
Email: signalewisham@googlemail.com

University Hospital Lewisham,

Social Services Dept. – Children and Families.

Social work support specifically for children and families attending Lewisham Hospital or Child Development Services as outpatients.
Social Work Department,
1st. Floor, Nursery Block,
University Hospital Lewisham,
Lewisham High St. SE13 6LH
Duty Team: **020 8314 6294/3852**
Or Hospital main switchboard: **020 8333 3000**

"Waving not drowning"

National network for parents of disabled children who are in paid employment.
Tel. **020 7017 0072**
www.workingfamilies.org.uk

Fun Fizzica

Active gym & dance sessions for 4-16 year old children and young people with disabilities and their siblings.
Tel: **020 8297 2625**
Email: info@funfizzical.org.uk



**Carers Lewisham, The Princess Royal Trust, Lewisham Carers Centre,
Waldram Place, Forest Hill, London, SE23 2LB
Tel: 020 8699 8686 Fax: 020 8699 0634
Email: info@carerslewisham.org.uk Web: www.carerslewisham.org.uk**

