

Carers Information Sheet 23

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

(This is the current legislation, however it is due to change on 1st September 2014. The new assessment plans will be called Education & Health Care Plans)

An assessment is undertaken by the Local Authority 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, schools and pre-schools can request a Statutory Assessment if the child has substantial educational/ learning difficulties.

How can you request a Statutory Assessment ?

A parent should first discuss their concerns with the school or pre school. If these concerns continue, a par-



ent can put a request in writing to The Local Authority.

Assessment process

The Local Authority takes lead responsibility for gathering information for the assessment. The assessment takes into account the child's educational, medical, nursing, social and other needs, and the information is carefully co-ordinated so that a judgement can be made as to whether or not a statement of special educational needs 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.

The Local Authority are required to 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) 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.

Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

Tele: 01325 392760

Website: www.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-disability-tribunal

Independent Parental Special Educational Advice (IPSEA)

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

Tele: 0800 018 4016 www.ipsea.org.uk

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)

Tele: 0300 0115142

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

Tele: 020 7138 1272/ 5

Kaleidoscope Children's Centre,
32 Rushey Green, SE6 4JF

NB The main telephone number 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

Tele: Duty Team: 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 any way 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.

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 a statement, planning should start at Year 9 when Children's 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 meets their needs.

Transitions Liaison Team

Tele: 020 7138 1100 Based at Kaleidoscope.

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 old.

Tele: 020 8314 8245

2nd Floor, Laurence House, Catford, SE6

Younger Adult Services **Tele: 020 8314 7766**

2nd Floor, Laurence House, Catford, SE6

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.

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

Spina bifida Hydrocephalus Information Networking Equality (SHINE)

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

Tele: 01733 555 988

www.shinecharity.org.uk

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

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

Based at Kaleidoscope, **Tele: 020 7138 1100**

Child Development Services

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

Based at Kaleidoscope **Tele: 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 re-housing. Any long waiting times for the service may have to be challenged. **Tele: 020 7138 1337**

Based at Kaleidoscope

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 Hub

Bonfield Road

SE13 5EU.

Tele: 020 8297 8056

email:lewisham@cafamily.org.uk

Coombe House/ Ravensbourne Project

Day care & activities for disabled children.

4 Crantock Road, Catford, London SE6 2QT

Tele: 020 8695 2661

Cystic Fibrosis Trust

All round advice and information, practical and emotional support for families with a child suffering from Cystic Fibrosis. **Tele: 020 8464 7211**

11 London Road, Bromley, Kent. BR1 1BY

Family Information Service

Directory of organisations for children and young people, parents and carers.

Tele: 020 8314 8567

Laurence House, 1 Catford Rd. SE6 4RU

email: fis@lewisham.gov.uk

House on the Hill Slaithwaite Road, SE13 6DJ.

Overnight/ short stays for assessed children, to give the family a break. **Tele: 020 8852 5834**

Lewisham Autism Support

Information, advice, support & workshops for families who have a newly diagnosed child with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Tele: 020 8699 3066

Based at Lewisham Carers Centre

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.

Bellingham Children's Centre, 109A Randlesdown

Road, SE6 3HB **Tele: 020 8698 2202**

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.

Tele: 020 7138 1100 Based at Kaleidoscope

Mencap

For carers of & people with a learning disability. News-letter, clubs, holiday bungalow, etc.

Tele: 020 8852 4100 72 Lee High Rd. SE13 5PT

Advice on disability/ discretionary trusts:

Tele: 020 7696 6925 / willsandtrusts@mencap.org.uk

Parentlineplus

National 24-hour helpline for stressed parents.

Tele: 0808 800 2222

www.familylives.org.uk

Parent Support Group

Helpline, counselling & support

Tele: 07908 101 767 www.psg.org.uk

Sickle Cell Society

Information & support for parents & carers.

Tele: 020 8961 7795 Regional Care Office South London

www.sicklecellsociety.org

SIGNAL

Meetings, information & mutual support for parent/ carers of children & young adults diagnosed as coming within the autistic spectrum or with Asperger's Syndrome.

Tele: 07946 632 477

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.

Address: 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.

Helpline Tele: 0300 012 0312

www.workingfamilies.org.uk



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

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