



Monday 8th September 2025

SENDCo Update to Parents – Autumn 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Sam Birkinshaw, and I am delighted to introduce myself as the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo) at Grove House Infant School. I am also one of the lead SENDCos for the Unity Education Trust, and support a number of schools within the local area.



I will be at Grove House Infant every Friday, and I am also available throughout the week via email at sbirkinshaw@unityeducationtrust.uk should you wish to get in touch.

As SENDCo, my role is to support children with special educational needs and disabilities, ensuring they have access to the right resources, strategies, and support to thrive in their learning. I work closely with teachers, support staff, external professionals, and families to create inclusive learning environments tailored to individual needs.

If your child is identified as needing additional support that is different from what is ordinarily available to all pupils, they may be placed onto the school's SEND register. Children on the SEND register will have a Support Plan, which outlines the strategies and interventions in place to help them succeed. I have attached an example copy of our SEND support plans to this letter, so that you can see the types of provisions that we can offer in school for a variety of different emerging or identified needs.

Some children may also have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), which is a more formal document that sets out long-term outcomes and provision across education, health, and care. If your child has an EHCP, I will be in touch shortly to arrange a date for their Annual Review, which is a key opportunity to reflect on progress and update the plan as needed.

You may wish to contact me if:

- You have concerns about your child's learning, development, or emotional wellbeing.
- Your child has a diagnosed or suspected special educational need or disability.
- You would like advice or support on how to help your child at home.
- You want to understand more about the support available in school.

Throughout the year, we will be running parent sessions and workshops focused on specific areas of need or ways to support learning and wellbeing at home. If you have any ideas or topics you would like us to cover, I would love to hear from you.

Attached to this letter is a document with helpful links to support agencies and resources that you may find useful. These cover a range of areas including mental health, learning needs, and family support.

I look forward to working with you and supporting your child's journey at Grove House Infant School.

Warm regards,

Sam Birkinshaw, Trust SENDCo, Unity Education Trust



Example of NEW SEND plan.

Yellow highlights show the supports currently in place to support the child in school to achieve their targets.

School SEN Support Plan – 2024/25										
Name:	Ann Example			Year:	2	Teacher:	Miss Hap			
Primary need: (INDES 0-7)	Speech & Language	4	Social Comm. & Interaction	1	Cognition & Learning	2	Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)	0	Physical and/or Sensory	0
Vulnerability:	School support (K)		EHCP (E)		PP	LAC	EAL	Home Lang:		
Why do I need extra support?	Ann is being supported by a speech therapist for difficulties with some speech sound production and verbal sentence construction. This has an impacted her ability to communicate with her friends and her ideas in the classroom.									
Area of need	My current SMART targets						Key Adults			
Speech and Language	To correctly articulate 'ch' and 'sh' sound when naming and sorting pictures of objects with these sounds in, being accurate at least 80% of the time						Miss Hap Miss Take			
Speech and Language	To be able to say a full sentence in answer to a question on a familiar topic, using "who, is doing, what, where" prompts from colourful semantics						Miss Take (Intervention)			
Cognition and Learning	To segment and blend words containing the digraphs 'ch' and 'sh' when found as the initial sound, being accurate at least 60% of the time						Miss Heard (RWI intervention)			
How will you help me? Highlight all adaptations/supports in place to achieve targets BLUE = EHCP Section F Provision										
	Speech and Lang.	Social Comm.	Cog. & Learning	SEMH	Phys & Sensory					
Universal Supports (INDES 1+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dual coding through visuals/objects (e.g. visual timetable, comic strips) Cue in instructions by name Simplify instructions Thinking time before responding Check understanding Cue in changes of topic Model how to ask for help / to clarify an instruction Word banks Pre-teach vocab Considered partners for group work Targeted questioning (based on Blanks levels) Speech sound modeling when repeating back (My Turn, Your Turn) Wellcomm / Neli / Group speech support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dual coding through visuals/objects (e.g. visual timetable, timers) Clear, consistent routines (e.g. seats) Prep. for changes (e.g. timers, now/next phrasing) Adapt to special interests Agreed calming area or strategy Modelled emotional language (I think you are feeling ...) Explicitly teach social/emotional skills (e.g. Zones of Reg.) Adult-guided play/ group work to model social communication Adapted play/lunch routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dual coding through visuals/objects (e.g. visual timetable, manipulatives) Assessment for Learning & adaptive teaching methods to pitch tasks appropriately Simple, clear language Revisit prior learning more frequently Use real-life experiences for child Thinking time before responding Check understanding Break down tasks into smaller chunks Use alternatives to writing where poss. Multi-sensory teaching Small group in-class/ catchup/ pre-teach Considered seating near adult/ role model Fastrack Phonics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dual coding through visuals/objects (e.g. visual timetable, emotions visuals) Responsibilities/roles to boost self-esteem Clear modeling of positive behaviours and praise when seen ('Catch me good') Fix it folder / restorative approaches to any challenging or harmful events Positive Behaviour Strategies (Norfolk Steps) PATHS / Zones of Regulation strategies around regulation Adults 'annotate' or model their own feelings to the child 	<p>Physical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine/Gross Motor skills group interventions Adapted equipment (pencils, grips etc) For specific physical issues (such as hearing, sight or mobility) see SENDCo for guidance <p>Sensory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensory audit to identify triggers / calming strategies Considered seating Movement breaks Adapted resources (fidget bands / cushions) Multi-sensory teaching Sensory Circuits Ear defenders Adapted play/lunch routines 					
Targeted (4+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLCN screening tool used to identify personalised targets 1-1 Speech sound intervention, guided by speech screener 1-1 or small group Blanks intervention (vocabulary) Personalised visual aids / prompts (e.g. core board) SENDCo to consider referral to SaLT/ATT Attention Autism sessions Colourful Semantics support / intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 or small group work on specific issue Lego/Brick-based therapy intervention Social stories Personalised visual timetable and prompts (e.g. Now and Next board) Adult support in managing transitions SENDCo to consider referral to Ed Psych. / ASD outreach / SCT SENDCo to meet with parents/carers to consider NDS referral 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening tools used to identify barriers & set personalised targets Consistent adult support in small group work in core lessons Booster / pre-teach sessions on key skills Additional 1:1 booster learning sessions 1:1 or small group memory skills sessions SENDCo to consider referral to Ed Psych. / ATT/Dyslexia Outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular 1:1 check in time with an adult to discuss daily events & strategies to manage feelings or anxieties Increased Home-school communication to share positives and track triggers Small group/1:1 work on nurture/emotional reg. Personalised ZoR toolkit Personalised 5-point scale SENDCo to consider referral to Ed Psych/ Inclusion & SEND / SCT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 Gross/Fine motor skills intervention Personalised equipment (scissors, writing area) Individual sensory kit Additional sensory breaks or strategies Personalised workspace/ alternate working area SENDCo to consider referral to OT/Physio SENDCo to meet with parents/carers to consider NDS referral 					
Specialist (6+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SaLT input and plan Alternative communication strategy (e.g. Obj. Of Ref; PECS; sign language) SRB referral / outreach placement Intensive Interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 support at breaks and lunchtimes 1:1 support in class to help manage social interactions Pos. Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) for scripting SRB referral / placement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 support in class to help access a personalized curriculum Personalised alternative recording method (e.g. ATT resources) SRB referral / outreach / placement TEACCH workstation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1:1 classroom support CAMHS referral / support 1:1 counselling Pos. Behaviour Support Plan (PBSP) for scripting SRB Referral / outreach/ placement Short-term reduced timetable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physio or OT input 1:1 support for PE or other physical tasks Personalised adaptive technology (ATT / medical team) Personalised sensory diet (informed by OT) Virtual Schools 					
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Supports for parents, carers and families

In our commitment to provide the highest quality of support, we will always try to signpost the most helpful services in our local area. Here is a directory of just some of the amazing services in our area:

1. Family Hubs – an amazing network of supports, knowledge and groups to help from birth to 25

Family Hubs bring together a range of existing services, so you are able to access the advice and support you need, when you need it. They are for families with babies, children and young people from conception until they reach the age of 19, or up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Family Hubs provide a place for you to access advice on how to take care of your child and ensure they are safe and healthy throughout their childhood and as they grow and develop. They are online and in person. More information can be found here: [Norfolk Family Hubs](#)

2. Just One Norfolk – A one-stop shop for a range of supports for adults, children and families

Just One Number is Norfolk's single point of access for Norfolk & Waveney Children & Young People's Health Services. This includes;

- The Norfolk Healthy Child Service
- Norfolk & Waveney Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Families, professionals and young people can get in touch with Just One Number by calling 0300 300 0123 or by visiting <https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/>

You may use the service for an appointment change, or you might have a parenting question or a worry about your child's physical & emotional health, or communication development. Whatever your reason to contact them, the team is there to help you.

Just One Norfolk has lots of information to support parenting and understanding your child and their behaviour, and here are some particularly helpful sections of the website

Managing Feelings (including big emotions) for children

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/emotional-health/children-young-people-s-emotional-health/managing-feelings/>

Understanding your child's behaviours advice and training.

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/child-development-additional-needs/behaviour-sleep/norfolk-positive-behaviour-strategies-pbs/>

Parental Wellbeing Supports -

<https://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/emotional-health/parental-emotional-health/>

3. *SEND and Inclusion Support Line – a phonenumber for parents of children with additional needs*

There's lots of information available on both the Norfolk Schools website [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council](#), and the [Local Offer](#).

However, if you can't find the information you need to support children and young people with SEND, or those at risk of exclusion, you can now call the Norfolk County Council SEND and Inclusion Support Line on **0333 313 7165** and speak to a professional for advice and information.

The phone line is available on weekdays from 9am until 5pm. The team can give advice on specific children or groups of children and young people with SEND. They can also provide support to help prevent exclusions.

4. *SENDIASS - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Independent Advice and Support Service*

Norfolk SENDIASS offers impartial and confidential advice to help you understand your rights and the services available for your child. Their comprehensive resources, workshops, and advice lines empower parents to advocate effectively for their children's needs. For more information and access to additional resources, please visit their webpage: [Norfolk SENDIASS](#).

5. *Norfolk STEPS – support more understanding and managing challenging behaviours*

I would also like to introduce you to the Norfolk STEPS approach to behaviour management. This approach is one we follow in school, and also provides supports for parents at home.

In school, the programme equips staff with the skills to manage behaviours by focusing on understanding the reasons behind actions, rather than merely responding to the behaviour itself. Emphasising a supportive and nurturing environment, the STEPS approach aims to promote positive behaviour across the school. Staff are trained to de-escalate potentially challenging situations through empathy and constructive communication. This not only aids in the immediate management of behaviour but also fosters a positive atmosphere conducive to learning, allowing our students with additional needs to thrive.

Norfolk STEPS also provides a range of resources for parents, which can be accessed here: [NORFOLK STEPS](#)

6. *Neurodevelopmental Service (NDS) - assessment and intervention for Autism and ADHD*

Moreover, for parents seeking access to additional support services, the Norfolk Neurodevelopmental Service is an invaluable resource. This service provides assessment and intervention for children experiencing neurodevelopmental challenges, including autism and ADHD. Understanding the specific needs of your child is

paramount, and partnering with this service can lead to more effective strategies and support in both home and educational settings.

For further details on what the NDS can offer, please visit their webpage: [Norfolk Neurodevelopmental Service](#).