

Information about the provision of special educational needs in Bridgend

If you think your child may have special educational needs (SEN), you should talk to your child's head teacher or the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) at school. If your child is not yet in school you may have already received advice from your health visitor or community paediatrician. Wherever possible pupils with SEN are taught in their local mainstream catchment area school rather than a special school.

Additional funding is included in each school's budget to help meet the needs of children with SEN. Each school has a SENCo to provide extra help and advice. Educational psychologists and specialist teachers (who work in several schools) are also available to support the school.

If your child has significant needs they may be referred for a statutory assessment, which in turn may lead to a statement of special educational needs. However, this is very rare, as most children with moderate additional needs will have their needs met in their local school from the school's resources.

If your child does have a statement, the local authority will seek to ensure their needs are still met in their local school. However, some children will have their needs met in specialist teaching facilities within a mainstream school, or occasionally in a special school. A number of mainstream schools have resources, facilities and specially trained staff to cater for the needs of children with particular learning difficulties. A few children have long-term, complex needs which are best met in a special school where additional specialist teaching, expertise and equipment are available. There are two special schools in Bridgend, Heronsbridge Special School and Ysgol Bryn Castell Special School. Pupils can only attend these schools if they are placed there by the local authority.

If a child holds a statement of special educational needs, then during the annual review in Year 5, discussions should take place around the secondary phase placement. The recommendations of this review will be considered by the local authority in the first term of Year 6.

Parental preferred placement does not apply to pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Parents can express a preference directly to the local authority or at the annual review and the local authority will consult with parents and schools to decide which school can best meet the needs of the child.

The local authority reserves the right to name a school which is not the catchment area school. If your child has a statement and you wish to change your child's school for some reason, you need to put this request in writing to the special educational needs statutory team asking them to amend the name of the school on your child's statement and this request will be considered by the local authority.

The local authority has developed a partnership with the Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP). SNAP is an independent body which provides support and guidance for parents of children with special needs. You can contact SNAP on their Helpline 0808 801 0608.

If you would like further information about provision for children with special education needs, please contact the Inclusion Service on 01656 815230