



## EDUCATION MY LIFE MATTERS

### SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) INFORMATION REPORT

# Contents

Contents .....	2
1. What types of SEN does the school provide for? .....	2
2. Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had? .....	3
3. What should I do if I think my child has SEN? .....	4
4. How will the school know if my child needs SEN support? .....	4
5. How will the school measure my child's progress? .....	5
6. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?.....	5
7. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education? .....	6
8. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child? .....	6
9. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child? .....	7
10. How will the school resources be secured for my child? .....	8
11. How will the school make sure my child is included in activities alongside learners who don't have SEND? .....	8
12. How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for learners with SEN or a disability? .....	8
13. How does the school support learners with disabilities? .....	8
14. How will the school support my child's mental health and emotional and social development? .....	8
15. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings or in preparing for adulthood? .....	9
16. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after learners with SEN? .....	9
17. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support? .....	9
18. What support is available for me and my family? .....	10
19. Glossary.....	10

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Dear parents and carers,

The aim of this information report is to explain how we implement our SEND policy. In other words, we want to show you how SEND support works in our school. If you want to know more about our arrangements for SEND, read our SEND policy.

You can find it on our website:

[https://www.emlm.org.uk/files/ugd/fd0fff\\_d97b79394a7c4fa89c6e97bc4b6f4225.pdf](https://www.emlm.org.uk/files/ugd/fd0fff_d97b79394a7c4fa89c6e97bc4b6f4225.pdf)

You can also ask a member of staff to make a copy and/or send you the policy.

**Note:** If there are any terms we have used in this information report that you're unsure of, you can look them up in the Glossary at the end of the report.

The term parent(s) will be used throughout this document to refer to parents, parent, carer or those with parental responsibility

## 1. What types of SEN does the school provide for?

As an Independent School offering Alternative Provision support, we believe that all learners have the right to achieve their full social and academic potential. At EMLM, we believe that all learners have learning differences rather than learning difficulties and it is our guiding principle to identify and assess these differences. Whilst this does not mean treating all learners equally; it means treating all learners as individuals and ensuring they have the required provision to achieve the highest possible standard and to ensure all learners make good progress.

Our school provides for learners with the following needs:

AREA OF NEED	CONDITION
<b>Communication and interaction</b>	Autism spectrum disorder
	Speech and language difficulties
<b>Cognition and learning</b>	Specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia
	Moderate learning difficulties
	Severe learning difficulties
<b>Social, emotional and mental health</b>	Attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD)
	Attention deficit disorder (ADD)
<b>Sensory and/or physical</b>	Hearing impairments
	Visual impairment
	Multi-sensory impairment

## 2. Which staff will support my child, and what training have they had?

The [Head of School](#) who is also the SENCO, Teachers, Mentors and other staff are all responsible for ensuring that all learners' needs are met, and they make the best possible progress.

### Our special educational needs co-ordinator, or SENCO

Our SENCO is Winsome Fletcher. She has 12 years of experience in this role and is a qualified teacher. She achieved the National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination in June 2013 and manages our SEND provision.

### Teachers

All of our teachers receive in-house SEN training, and are supported by the SENCO to meet the needs of learners who have SEN.

### Learning Mentors

We have a small team of Learning Mentors, who are trained to deliver interventions. In the last academic year, the Learning Mentors have awareness training, for example, in using the SEND Toolkit, behavioural difficulties, Cognitive Load and the Zones of Regulation.

### External agencies and experts

Sometimes we need extra help to offer our learners the support that they need. Whenever necessary we will work with external support services to meet the needs of our learners with SEN and to support their families. These include:

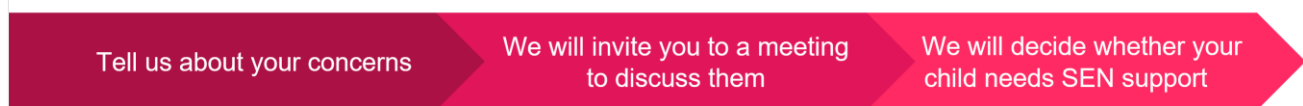
- › Speech and language service
- › Educational psychologists
- › Specialists in other settings e.g. other Alternative Provisions, Specialist Schools.

- › ASD and Sensory Support Team
- › Hearing Impairment team
- › Visual Impairment team
- › Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)
- › Education welfare officers
- › Social services and other LA-provided support services
- › Social Services including the Youth Offending Team
- › Youth Services
- › School Nurse

### 3. What should I do if I think my child has SEN?

As an Independent School offering Alternative Provision, Education – My Life Matters is in itself ‘additional to or different from’ a mainstream setting, however not all learners will be automatically regarded as having SEN/D. EMLM recognises that every behaviour is a form of communication, and we aim to investigate further any possible additional needs.

We recognise the importance of early identification and aim to identify learners’ special needs as early as possible. The referral form from the learners’ usual placement allows for significant detail to be shared about the assessments and results of diagnostic tools that have been used to identify needs.



If you think your child might have SEN, the first person you should tell is your child’s Teacher or Learning Mentor.

They will pass the message on to our SENCO, Winsome Fletcher who will be in touch to discuss your concerns.

You can also contact the SENCO directly on 0208 698 9663.

We will meet with you to discuss your concerns and try to get a better understanding of what your child’s strengths and difficulties are.

Together we will decide what outcomes to seek for your child and agree on next steps.

We will make a note of what has been discussed and add this to your child’s record. You will also be given a copy of this.

If we decide that your child needs SEN support, we will formally notify you in writing and your child will be added to the school’s SEND register.

### 4. How will the school know if my child needs SEN support?

All our staff are aware of SEND and are on the lookout for any learners who are not making the expected level of progress in their schoolwork or socially. This might include areas such as reading, writing and maths.

If the teacher notices that a learner is falling behind, they try to find out if the learner has any gaps in their learning. If they can find a gap, they will give the learner extra tuition to try to fill it. Learners who do not have SEN usually make progress quickly once the gap in their learning has been filled.

If the learner is still struggling to make the expected progress, the teacher will talk to the SENCO, and will contact you to discuss the possibility that your child has SEN.

The SENCO will observe the learner in the classroom to see what their strengths and difficulties are. They will have discussions with your child’s teacher and learning mentor, to see if there have been any issues with, or changes in, their progress, attainment or behaviour. They will also compare your child’s progress and development with their peers and available national data.

The SENCO will ask for your opinion and speak to your child to get their input as well. They may also, where appropriate, ask for the opinion of external experts such as a speech and language therapist or an educational psychologist.

Based on all of this information, the SENCO will decide whether your child needs SEN support. You will be told the outcome of the decision in writing.

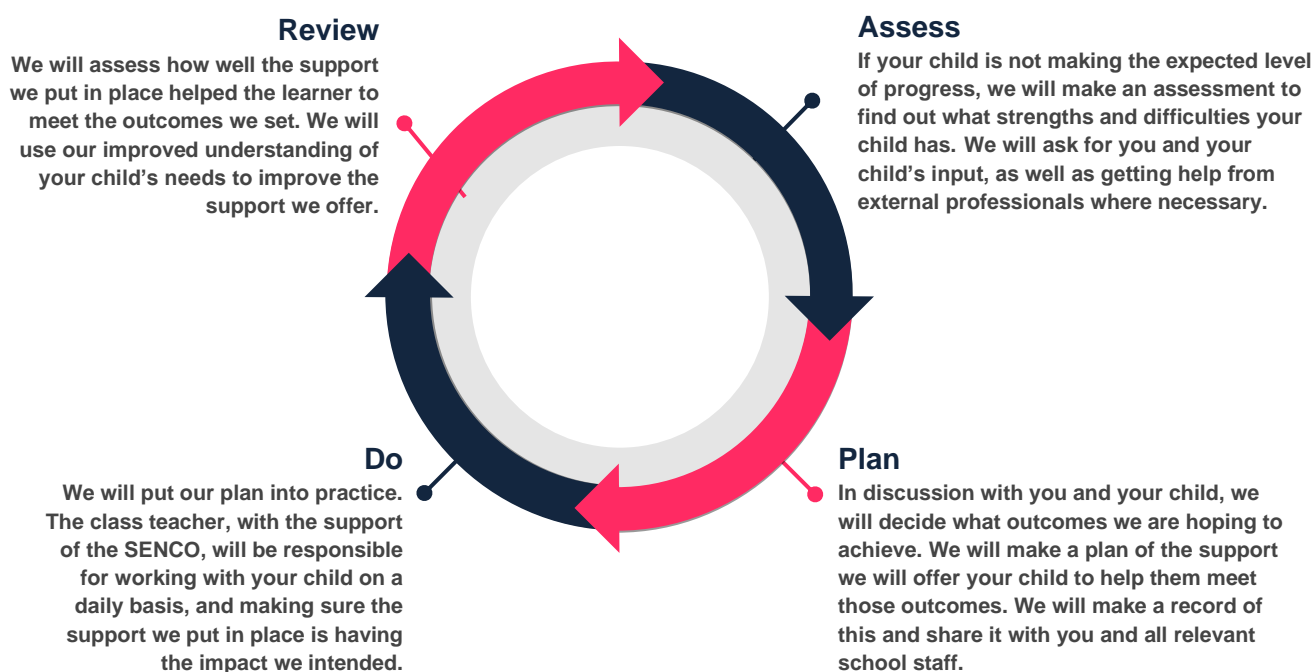
If your child does need SEND support, their name will be added to the school's SEND register, and the SENCO will work with you to create a SEND support plan for them.

## 5. How will the school measure my child's progress?

Progress towards attainment outcomes is tracked and reviewed weekly by staff and termly with the parents and the learner. If learners fail to make expected progress the decision may be made to undertake further informal/formal assessment of their learning and effectiveness of the interventions offered.

We will follow the 'graduated approach' to meeting your child's SEN needs.

The graduated approach is a 4-part cycle of **assess, plan, do, review**.



As a part of the planning stage of the graduated approach, we will set outcomes that we want to see your child achieve.

Whenever we run an intervention with your child, we will assess them before the intervention begins. This is known as a 'baseline assessment.' We do this so we can see how much impact the intervention has on your child's progress.

We will track your child's progress towards the outcomes we set over time and improve our offer as we learn what your child responds to best.

This process will be continual. If the review shows a learner has made progress, they may no longer need the additional provision made through SEN support. For others, the cycle will continue, and the school's targets, strategies and provisions will be revisited and refined.

## 6. How will I be involved in decisions made about my child's education?

We will provide termly reports on your child's progress. Your child's teacher will meet you three times a year to:

- › Set clear outcomes for your child's progress
- › Review progress towards those outcomes

- › Discuss the support we will put in place to help your child make that progress
- › Identify what we will do, what we will ask you to do, and what we will ask your child to do

The SENCO may also attend these meetings to provide extra support.

We know that you're the expert when it comes to your child's needs and aspirations. So, we want to make sure you have a full understanding of how we're trying to meet your child's needs, so that you can provide insight into what you think would work best for your child.

We also want to hear from you as much as possible so that we can build a better picture of how the SEND support we are providing is impacting your child outside of school.

If your child's needs or aspirations change at any time, please let us know right away so we can keep our provision as relevant as possible.

After any discussion we will make a record of any outcomes, actions and support that have been agreed. This record will be shared with all relevant staff, and you will be given a copy.

If you have concerns that arise between these meetings, please contact us on 0208 698 9663.

## **7. How will my child be involved in decisions made about their education?**

The level of involvement will depend on your child's age, and level of competence. We recognise that no two learners are the same, so we will decide on a case-by-case basis, with your input.

We may seek your child's views by asking them to:

- › Attend meetings to discuss their progress and outcomes
- › Prepare a presentation, written statement, make a video or drawing.
- › Discuss their views with a member of staff who can act as a representative during the meeting
- › Complete a survey

## **8. How will the school adapt its teaching for my child?**

Please look at the school website which includes a link to our [Accessibility Plan](#) as follows:

Your child's teacher is responsible and accountable for the progress and development of all the learners in their class.

High-quality teaching is our first step in responding to your child's needs. We will make sure that your child has access to a broad and balanced curriculum in every year they are at our school.

We will differentiate (or adapt) how we teach to suit the way the learner works best. There is no 'one size fits all' approach to adapting the curriculum, we work on a case-by case basis to make sure the adaptations we make are meaningful to your child.

These adaptations include:

- › Differentiating our curriculum to make sure all learners are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1-to-1 work, adapting the teaching style or content of the lesson.
- › Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud.
- › Adapting our resources and staffing
- › Using recommended aids, such as laptops, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, etc.
- › Learning Mentors will support learners on a 1-to-1 basis when working on their individual targets
- › Learning Mentors will support learners in small groups when working collaboratively with others

We may also provide the following interventions:

- An evaluated PHSE curriculum that aims to provide learners with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to enhance their emotional and social knowledge and well-being

- 1:1 mentoring support
- Individual and small group, evidence-led interventions. This aims to improve interaction skills, emotional resilience and well-being

AREA OF NEED	CONDITION	HOW WE SUPPORT THESE LEARNERS
<b>Communication and interaction</b>	Autism spectrum disorder	Visual timetables Now and Next board Social stories Adaptation to timetable where necessary
	Speech and language difficulties	Speech and language therapy
<b>Cognition and learning</b>	Specific learning difficulties, including dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia	Coloured overlays Coloured paper Slope board
	Moderate learning difficulties	EMLM SEND Toolkit
	Severe learning difficulties	EMLM SEND Toolkit
<b>Social, emotional and mental health</b>	ADHD, ADD	Calm Room access Breaks in timetable Practical activities
	Adverse childhood experiences and/or mental health issues	Emotional Wellbeing/ Social skills group
<b>Sensory and/or physical</b>	Hearing impairment	
	Visual impairment	Limiting classroom displays Large font size on teaching aids
	Multi-sensory impairment	EMLM SEND Toolkit
	Physical impairment	EMLM SEND Toolkit

These interventions are part of our contribution to Lewisham's local offer [www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk) .

## 9. How will the school evaluate whether the support in place is helping my child?

We will evaluate the effectiveness of provision for your child by:

- Reviewing their progress towards their goals each term
- Reviewing the impact of interventions after six weeks
- Using learner questionnaires

- Monitoring by the SENCO
- Using provision maps to measure progress
- Holding an annual review (if they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan)

#### **10. How will the school resources be secured for my child?**

It may be that your child's needs mean we need to secure:

- Extra equipment or facilities
- Additional support from a teaching assistant
- Further training for our staff
- External specialist expertise

If that's the case, we will consult with external agencies to get recommendations on what will best help your child access their learning.

#### **11. How will the school make sure my child is included in activities alongside learners who don't have SEND?**

At EMLM, we believe that all learners have learning differences rather than learning difficulties and it is our guiding principle to identify and assess these differences. Whilst this does not mean treating all learners equally; it means treating all learners as individuals and ensuring they have the required provision to achieve the highest possible standard and to ensure all learners make good progress. We also ensure that there are no barriers to our learners with SEND and that they enjoy the same activities as other learners, including physical activities.

All off-school visits are available to all our learners. All learners are encouraged to take part in sports and fitness, special workshops as no learner is ever excluded from taking part in these activities because of their SEN or disability and we will make whatever reasonable adjustments are needed to make sure that they can be included.

#### **12. How does the school make sure the admissions process is fair for learners with SEN or a disability?**

Learners are referred from a range of settings, mainstream school, virtual school, other Alternative provision and EMLM ensures that learners with SEND are admitted with other learners in accordance with its Admissions Policy. For learners with an EHCP, parents or carers have the right to request a particular setting, and the local authority must comply with that preference and name the provision in the EHC plan unless:

it would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or SEN of the child or young person, or the attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

Before making the decision to name EMLM in a learner's EHCP, the local authority will send [Head of School](#) a copy of the EHCP who will then consider their comments very carefully before a final decision on placement is made. In addition, the local authority must also seek the agreement of EMLM where the draft EHCP sets out any provision to be delivered on their premises that have been secured through a direct payment (personal budget).

#### **13. How does the school support learners with disabilities?**

Please find link here for [Equality](#) Policy and [Accessibility](#) Policy

#### **14. How will the school support my child's mental health and emotional and social development?**

We provide support for learners to progress in their emotional and social development in the following ways:



- › Learners with SEN are also encouraged to be part of groups to promote teamwork/building friendships
- › We provide extra 1:1 pastoral support for listening to the views of learners with SEN
- › We run emotional wellbeing sessions for learners who need extra support with social or emotional development
- › We have a 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying. We prevent bullying in the school by regularly celebrating individual differences, take part in national themed days/week and in response to and through explicit teaching/ PHSE lessons.

## **15. What support will be available for my child as they transition between classes or settings or in preparing for adulthood?**

### **Between schools**

When your child is moving on from our school, we will ask you and your child what information you want us to share with the new setting.

### **Between phases**

A detailed referral form will be provided on entry to ensure as much information as possible is relayed to EMLM from the feeder school. An Education Planning Meeting with the school and parents will be arranged, if required, SEND plan and IEP will be drawn up to support the learner's individual needs. Parents and learners will be given guided visits to the provision before a decision is made for them to attend.

We will also arrange meetings with the parents of incoming learners to discuss how we can best welcome their child into our community. We set up new learners with a Learning Mentor or buddy, where appropriate to help them get settled in and make friends.

### **Next stage, preparing for adulthood**

Preparing for post-16 transitions involves some important considerations to ensure a smooth and supportive transition. Where learners reach transition, careful planning and liaison with Key Stage 5 provision such as further education colleges, apprenticeships, and employment opportunities will take place. EMLM ensures that learners, their parents and carers are actively involved in the planning process as additionally learners will also receive independent advice from Lewisham Work Experience team.

In some instances, given the nature of the provision, the learner will either return to the referring school or transition to another provider. For those remaining with EMLM familiarisation visits are arranged to potential providers to help learners become familiar with the new environments and locations. Close collaboration with the new placement, involving parents, carers, and learners, will be maintained.

It is our goal that our learners achieve their ambitions to enter further education, employment, or independent living in order to be able to participate in society.

## **16. What support is in place for looked-after and previously looked-after learners with SEN?**

Winsome Fletcher as our designated teacher and our SENCO, will ensure that all staff understand how a looked-after or previously looked-after learner's circumstances and their SEN might interact, and what the implications are for teaching and learning.

Learners who are looked-after or previously looked-after will be supported much in the same way as any other child who has SEND. However, looked-after learners will also have a Personal Education Plan (PEP). We will make sure that the PEP and any SEN support plans or EHC plans are consistent and complement one another.

## **17. What should I do if I have a complaint about my child's SEN support?**

Under the Children and Families Act 2014 parents and carers may seek advice on resolving disagreements with the LA and/or the Independent Mediation Service. The school will make available on request further information about this process.

Complaints about SEN provision in our school should be made to the SENCo in the first instance. They will then be referred to the school's complaints policy.

If you are not satisfied with the school's response, you can escalate the complaint. In some circumstances, this right also applies to the learner themselves.

To see a full explanation of suitable avenues for complaint, see pages 246 and 247 of the [SEN Code of Practice](#).

If you feel that our school discriminated against your child because of their SEND, you have the right to make a discrimination claim to the first tier SEND tribunal. To find out how to make such a claim, you should visit: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-school/disability-discrimination>

You can make a claim about alleged discrimination regarding:

- › Admission
- › Exclusion
- › Provision of education and associated services
- › Making reasonable adjustments, including the provision of auxiliary aids and services

Before going to a SEND tribunal, you can go through processes called disagreement resolution or mediation, where you try to resolve your disagreement before it reaches the tribunal.

## 18. What support is available for me and my family?

If you have questions about, SEND, or are struggling to cope, please get in touch to let us know. We want to support you, your child and your family.

To see what support is available to you locally, have a look at Lewisham's local offer. Lewisham publishes information about the local offer on their website: [www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.lewishamlocaloffer.org.uk)

Our local special educational needs and disabilities information advice and support services (SENDIASS) organisation is: [Lewisham SENDIASS | KIDS](#)

National charities that offer information and support to families of learners with SEND are:

- › [IPSEA](#)
- › [SEND family support](#)
- › [NSPCC](#)
- › [Family Action](#)
- › [Special Needs Jungle](#)

## 19. Glossary

- › **Access arrangements** – special arrangements to allow learners with SEND to access assessments or exams
- › **Annual review** – an annual meeting to review the provision in a learner's EHC plan
- › **Area of need** – the 4 areas of need describe different types of needs a learner with SEND can have. The 4 areas are communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health needs.
- › **CAMHS** – child and adolescent mental health services
- › **Differentiation** – when teachers adapt how they teach in response to a learner's needs
- › **EHC needs assessment** – the needs assessment is the first step on the way to securing an EHC plan. The local authority will do an assessment to decide whether a child needs an EHC plan.
- › **EHC plan** – an education, health and care plan is a legally-binding document that sets out a child's needs and the provision that will be put in place to meet their needs.
- › **First-tier tribunal/SEND tribunal** – a court where you can appeal against the local authority's decisions about EHC needs assessments or plans and against discrimination by a school or local authority due to SEND

- › **Graduated approach** – an approach to providing SEN support in which the school provides support in successive cycles of assessing the learner’s needs, planning the provision, implementing the plan, and reviewing the impact of the action on the learner
- › **Intervention** – a short-term, targeted approach to teaching a learner with a specific outcome in mind
- › **Local offer** – information provided by the local authority which explains what services and support are on offer for learners with SEN in the local area
- › **Outcome** – target for improvement for learners with SEND. These targets don't necessarily have to be related to academic attainment
- › **Reasonable adjustments** – changes that the school must make to remove or reduce any disadvantages caused by a child’s disability
- › **SENCO** – the special educational needs co-ordinator
- › **SEN** – special educational needs
- › **SEND** – special educational needs and disabilities
- › **SEND Code of Practice** – the statutory guidance that schools must follow to support learners with SEND
- › **SEN information report** – a report that schools must publish on their website, that explains how the school supports learners with SEN
- › **SEN support** – special educational provision which meets the needs of learners with SEN
- › **Transition** – when a learner moves between years, phases, schools or institutions or life stages