

**Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Community Services**

**Meeting Special Educational
Needs in Merthyr Tydfil
2013-2015**



**A GUIDE FOR
PARENTS AND CARERS**

**“Putting children first ...
helping schools improve”**

A MESSAGE TO PARENTS/CARERS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

We are pleased to introduce this information pack on how Merthyr Tydfil Community Services provides for the education of children and young people who have Special Educational Needs. It describes the Authority's policy and approach towards meeting the needs of all children and young people by working in close partnership with parents and with schools.

The pack contains a great deal of information. You may wish to read each section or select those which are relevant to your child.

If you need help with understanding the information in this pack please contact Mrs Danielle Jones, on 01685 724642 who will be able to assist you. Mrs Jones is based at Schools' Department / Community Services Directorate, Unit 5, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil.

The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2002) is designed to offer clearer guidance for early years providers, primary school and secondary school teachers, local education authorities, families, and all those involved in providing for the special educational needs of children and young people.



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MERTHYR TYDFIL COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY

“The purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same. But the help individual children need in progressing towards them will be different”.

(Warnock Report 1981 paragraph 1:4).

The Welsh Government is committed to the provision of high quality education services and enabling all children to reach their true potential.

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council values all its pupils equally and aims to ensure that appropriate provision is made for children and young people of all abilities.

The Authority wishes to promote the personal development of all pupils within the County Borough and will provide quality educational opportunities for all children and young people.

It recognises the entitlement of children and young people to a broad, balanced, relevant and differentiated curriculum, including the National Curriculum, at an appropriate level. The principle will apply regardless of gender, race or special need.

Community Services will aim to help children and young people to become independent in learning and in forming judgements as well as showing care to others and awareness of what they can contribute to and expect from society.

Community Services has a commitment to the principle of inclusion provided this takes into account the views of parents/carers and is compatible with :

- the child or young person receiving the special educational provision required;
- the provision of efficient education for the children or young people with whom he/she is to be educated;
- the efficient use of resources.

Community Services acknowledges that a child or young person may at any time have educational needs that will require additional resources. The special educational needs (SEN) of children and young people, including those of pre-school age, will be identified recorded, assessed and met as early as possible and be reviewed regularly.

All children and young people with special educational needs will have those needs met in local mainstream schools unless there is some good, child centred reason why they should attend an alternative provision.



Community Services will maintain a flexible continuum of provision designed to meet the special educational needs of individual children. The special educational needs of most children and young people will be met in their school from the school's resources.

It is recognised that there are children and young people whose needs will require additional resources and every effort will be made to ensure that special educational provision will be consistent and coherent for all children within the County Borough.

For those children and young people who, for various reasons, need to be educated otherwise than at school, inclusion initiatives have been established within the County Borough. Places within these initiatives are allocated in close collaboration with parents and the children and young people themselves.

Community Services is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in order that all children and young people benefit fully from their educational provision and develop to their full potential.

Parents and carers are encouraged to take part in the process of identifying and assessing their child's special educational needs. Parents and carers will be involved in making decisions about how and where their child's special educational needs may be met. Where appropriate, this process will take into account the child or young person's own views.

The process of participation includes guidance to parents and carers about their statutory rights, help they may access and the way in which they can work in partnership with their child's school.

Community Services maintains a range of central services to assist with assessment and provision for children and young people with special educational needs. Community Services works closely with other agencies including the Health Service and voluntary organisations, the provision of medical and paramedical support therapy and advice is regarded as primarily the responsibility of the local Health Trust.

Community Services acknowledges the basic duties of Community Services to work collaboratively with schools, encouraging and supporting them in taking responsibility for the learning of all children and young people. These duties are laid out in the 1996 Education Act, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales 2002.

Community Services will provide guidance, support and necessary training to governors, head teachers and staff in relation to their duties and responsibilities for children and young people with special educational needs.



Community Services recognises its duty to monitor and regularly review the provision of special education. It maintains a service for identifying the special educational needs of any child or young person as fully and promptly as possible. Necessary support from Community Services is then provided without undue delay. The quality of the provision and the deployment of specialist staff across the County Borough is reviewed regularly.

The progress of each child or young person with special educational needs is closely monitored and reviewed at least annually. Consultation with parents and any professional involved is arranged as required.

SERVICES

Education Psychology Service (EPS)

The EPS has a key role in working with other agencies in making provision for children and young people with special educational needs. In many cases the education psychologist will be the parents' first point of contact. After a child's needs have been assessed the EP will advise on the best way forward.

Provision can be made for parents and carers who wish for their child to be assessed in their first language.

Pre-school children are often made known to the EPS by health and children's services with the consent of parents. If there is a concern, once a child has started school the head teacher can make a referral to the EPS with consent of parents. Parents are welcome to make contact with the EPS at any time if they have a concern.

Learning Support Service

The Learning Support Service plays an important role in helping schools identify, assess and make special educational provision for children with special educational needs. The service works in partnership with children, families, schools and professionals from other agencies in supporting children and young people.

The Learning Support Service provides peripatetic and advisory teacher support for :

- learning difficulties;
- literacy difficulties including specific learning difficulties / dyslexia;
- speech and language difficulties;
- sensory difficulties;
- physical and motor difficulties.



Behaviour Support Service

The Behaviour Support Service provides supportive intervention for children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The Service works in partnership with children, families, schools, psychologists and others in supporting children and young people through a range of intervention and educational placements.

Looked After Children's Education and Support Service (LACES)

The LACES team works specifically with children in public care by supporting this vulnerable group in maintaining school placements and maximising educational outcomes and life chances.

Special Tuition Service

The Special Tuition service provides education for children and young people who cannot attend school because of sickness, injury, pregnancy, exclusion or psychological reasons.

PROVISION

Community Services has the following provision to support children and young people with special educational needs:

- i. A Portage Home Advisory Service for pre-school children with special educational needs and their families.
- ii. Learning resource bases in mainstream schools for primary aged children 3 -11 who have developmental delay or severe and complex learning difficulties.



Special Educational Needs

Children and young people have special educational needs if they have additional learning needs which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Children and young people have a learning difficulty if they:

- (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- (b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local authority.
- (c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above or would so do if special educational provision was not made for them.

Children and young people will have needs and requirements which may fall into at least one of the following four areas.

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- behaviour, emotional and social development
- sensory and/or physical

If you have concerns about your child's education please contact the headteacher or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your local school.



Code of Practice

The SEN Code of Practice for Wales provides practical advice to Local Education Authorities, maintained schools, early years settings and others on carrying out their statutory duties to identify, assess and make provision for children's special educational needs.

Fundamental Principles

The detailed guidance in this Code is informed by these general principles and should be read with them clearly in mind:

- a child or young person with special educational needs should have their needs met;
- the special educational needs of children and young people will normally be met in mainstream schools or settings;
- the views of the child or young person should be sought and taken into account;
- parents have a vital role to play in supporting their child's education;
- children and young people with special educational needs should be offered full access to a broad, balanced and relevant education, based on the National Curriculum. Early Years children currently follow the 'Foundation Phase' for pupils aged 3-7 years.

Early Years

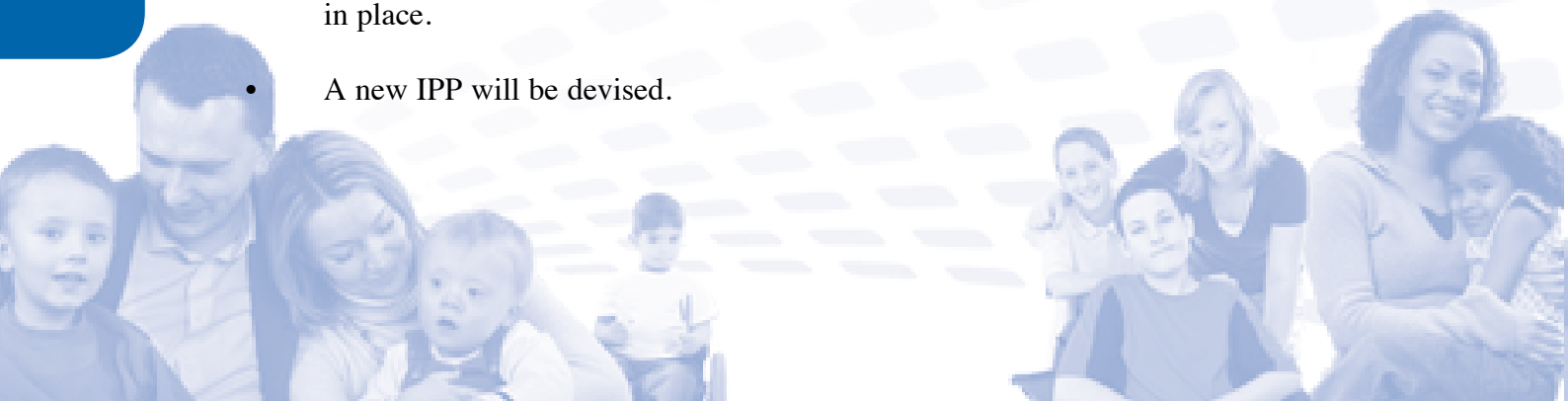
The SEN Code of Practice recommends a graduated response in monitoring individual children's progress throughout the early years. Where a child appears not to be making progress either generally or in a specific aspect of learning then it may be necessary to present different opportunities or use alternative approaches to learning.

Early Years Action

- Early Years Action is required when education practitioners or the SENCO, identify that a child has, or may have special educational needs
- Practitioners provide interventions that are additional to, or different from, those provided as part of the setting's usual curriculum and strategies.
- An Individual Play Plan (IPP) will be devised.

Early Years Action Plus

- The early education practitioner who works day-to-day with the child and the SENCO are provided with advice or support from outside specialists.
- Additional interventions or strategies to those at Early Years Action may need to be put in place.
- A new IPP will be devised.



School Action - Primary and Secondary

When a teacher or SENCO identifies a child or young person with SEN the classteacher should provide interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the schools normal differentiated strategies.

Strategies employed to enable the child or young person to progress should be recorded within the IEP.

School Action Plus - Primary and Secondary

- The SENCO and class teacher, in consultation with parents, ask for help from external services.
- The class teacher and SENCO are provided with advice or support from outside specialists.
- Additional intervention or strategies to those at School Action may need to be put in place.
- A new IEP will be devised
- The SENCO takes the lead in any further assessment of the child or young person, planning future intervention for the child or young person in discussions with colleagues and in monitoring and reviewing the action taken.

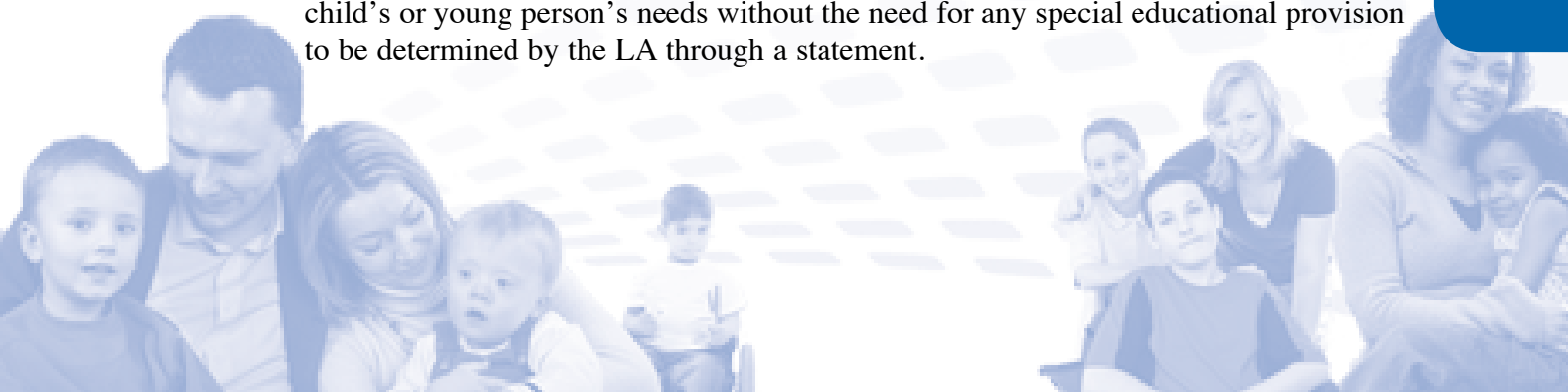
Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs

The special educational needs of the great majority of children or young people should be met effectively within mainstream settings through Early Years Action and Early Years Action Plus or School Action and School Action Plus, without the Local Authority (LA) needing to make a statutory assessment. In a very small number of cases the LA will need to make a statutory assessment of special educational needs and then consider whether or not to issue a statement.

Statutory assessment involves :

- Consideration by the LA, working co-operatively with parents, the child or young person's school and, as appropriate, other agencies, as to whether a statutory assessment of the child's special educational needs is necessary.

Statutory assessment itself will not always lead to a statement. The information gathered during an assessment may indicate ways in which the school can meet the child's or young person's needs without the need for any special educational provision to be determined by the LA through a statement.



Provision for Special Educational Needs

For most children and young people, provision will be made for special needs within mainstream schools. School governing bodies have the responsibility to ensure that such needs are met within the resources made available to schools.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) POLICY

The governors of every school, in conjunction with the headteacher, must produce a Special Educational Needs policy describing what the school aims to do to help pupils who have special needs. They need to report every year, within their annual report to parents, about how successful the SEN policy is.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS CO-ORDINATOR (SENCO)

Schools are required to have a designated teacher known as the SENCO who is responsible for:

- the day-to-day working of the SEN policy;
- co-ordinating provision for children and young people with special education needs;
- keeping the school's SEN records up-to-date and overseeing the records of all children and young people with special educational needs;
- organising and attending review meetings;
- liaising with parents of pupils with special educational needs;
- liaising with others working with the child or young person, especially the EP and SEN Service members;
- supporting and advising other teachers.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS RECORDS

Schools are required to record details of all children or young people who are identified as having special educational needs. The needs and progress of the child or young person are monitored and reviewed. Parents must be kept informed.

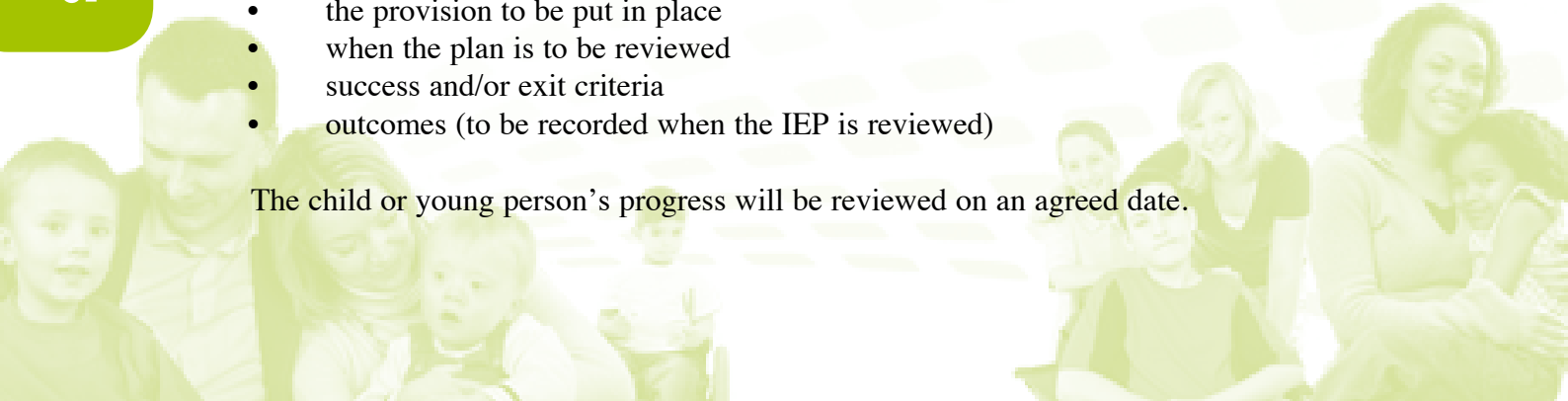
INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)

Children and young people at School Action, School Action Plus and those who have a statement of special educational needs are required to have Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

The IEP will outline the action needed to support the child or young person, including:

- the short term targets set for/or by the child or young person,
- teaching strategies to be used
- the provision to be put in place
- when the plan is to be reviewed
- success and/or exit criteria
- outcomes (to be recorded when the IEP is reviewed)

The child or young person's progress will be reviewed on an agreed date.



Your child may be one of approximately 20% of children and young people who have special educational needs at some time during their school career.

You may be wondering about his or her education and about what help is available.

In Merthyr Tydfil a range of support is available:

- most children and young people will receive the support they need in their local school;
- some children and young people will benefit from provision in a specially resourced class in a mainstream school;
- some children and young people will need the special provision of Greenfield School;
- a very small number of children and young people will need placement in schools outside the County Borough.

Children needing placement outside their local school may be provided with transport if the circumstance meet the criteria of the LA's transport policy.

It is the policy of the Merthyr Tydfil CS to enable children and young people with special educational needs to be educated in local schools where possible and desirable, provided this takes into account parental views, and is compatible with:

- ensuring the special education provision which the child's or young person's learning difficulty calls for;
- the provision of efficient education for the other children and young people in the class or school;
- the best use of resources, including equipment and teacher time.

Every effort is made to ensure that the provision of special education is equally accessible for all of Merthyr Tydfil's pupils. It is carefully planned to allow continuity between phases, between agencies and between mainstream and specialist provision.



There are a number of playgroups available where your child's development can be nurtured through play. A full list is available from the Early Years and Childcare Development Officer, based at the Integrated Children's Centre, Cwm Golau, Pentrebach (01685 727374).

Some children of pre-school age may have special educational needs. Early identification and assessment of their needs may take place over a period of time. If you think your child has special educational needs, but is not yet at school, contact your doctor or health visitor. They will be able to offer professional guidance and practical support.

Support is provided by:

1. The Portage Service

Portage is a home visiting service for pre-school age children who are experiencing difficulties with their development. The Portage worker assesses the needs of each child and in partnership with the parent builds on the skills that the child already has acquired through a programme of structured activities. The Portage worker may visit your home on a regular basis to work with you and your child. The service is supervised by the Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP), who receives and considers all referrals.

Parents can gain access to the services of the Portage worker by requesting an assessment from the Senior Clinical Medical Officer (SCMO), following discussion with their doctor or health visitor. The SCMO will, in consultation with the EP, decide whether or not the Portage Service is appropriate.

2. The Advisory Teacher

The advisory teacher works under the direction of the Head of School Improvement and the PEP and her role is to :

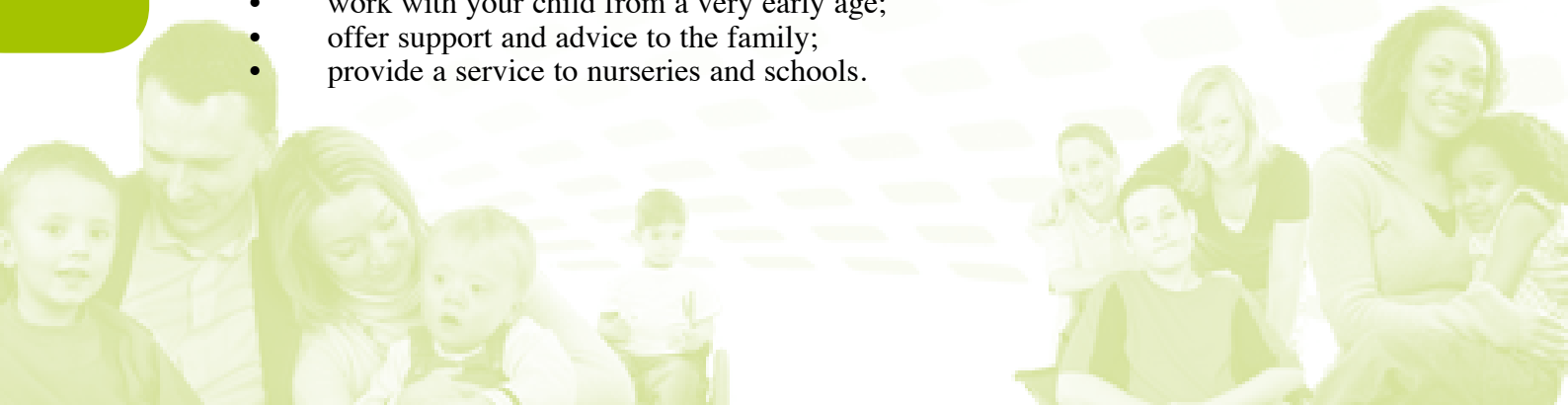
- discuss with you, your child's placement;
- to arrange visits to school;
- to provide practical support;
- to support parents who may be asked to contribute to drawing up a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

Parents can gain access to the services of the advisory teacher by contacting the EP and SEN Service on (01685) 724642.

3. Specialist Support Teachers

If your child has a hearing or sight difficulty, specialist teachers are able to:

- make home visits;
- work with your child from a very early age;
- offer support and advice to the family;
- provide a service to nurseries and schools.



4. Placement in an LA Nursery Class or School

Priority is given to children with special educational needs, in accordance with The Children Act (1989). In the first instance you should contact the local school and speak to the head-teacher.

5. Foundation Phase Learning Resource Bases

Foundation Phase LRBs offer provision for pupils from pre-school age to the end of Foundation Phase.

Children may experience a diversity of difficulties including learning difficulties and may have multiple needs.

Placement may be full or part time.

Foundation Phase LRBs are situated in the following schools in Merthyr Tydfil:

Goetre Primary School (2 classes).
 Edwardsville Primary School.
 Coed y Dderwen School.

The 4 LRB - Foundation Phase offer:

- A period of recorded observation through teaching for at least two terms with observation recorded by the class teacher and an LSA;
- A high level of resourcing of 1 teacher to 8 children;
- Specialist input from Education Psychologists, Advisory Teachers and therapists;
- Support for parents and frequent involvement;
- Individual education programmes and individual assessments carried out by the school;
- Multi disciplinary review of children's needs and progress at the end of the Autumn Term and Spring Term;
- Careful planning for meeting special educational needs;
- Inclusion, where possible, into mainstream classes for all or part of the curriculum.

Parents and carers have the right to ask for a statutory assessment if their child is over 2 years old and has special educational needs. If the LA agrees that it is necessary it will be undertaken and may result in a Statement of Special Educational Needs. (See section 13 – The Statementing Process.)

6. Placement at Greenfield School

Children identified at an early age as requiring special school provision may attend Greenfield School.



Many children and young people will have additional learning needs at some time in their school life. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is the person responsible for co-ordinating school support and liaising with outside agencies.

LA Support

1. **Education Psychologists**

Educational and Child Psychologists assess the learning, social and emotional needs of children and young people. They assess, advise, and assist teachers to compile a programme for your child.

2. **Special Educational Needs Advisory Teachers and Specialist Support Teachers**

Special Educational Needs Advisory Teachers and Specialist Support Teachers are experienced in working across the continuum of special needs. They offer advice to teachers, support personnel and parents. They help plan programmes of work, advise on the use of resources and teaching techniques, and provide training on matters related to special educational needs.

3. **Language Support Teachers**

Primary children whose literacy skills are slow to develop may receive extra support from a Language Support Teacher which may be in class or through withdrawal in small groups.

4. **Learning Support Assistants**

Some schools may have the support of a learning support assistant (LSA) who works alongside the teacher in a class. They assist children and young people with their learning as well as care for their physical needs.

5. **Behaviour Support Teachers**

Behaviour Support Teachers are experienced in providing support for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. They help plan individual programmes and give advice on the use of resources and teaching techniques.

PROVISION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS:

- **Foundation Phase Learning Resource Bases (Foundation Phase LRB)**

Classes offer provision for children from pre-school age to the end of Foundation Phase. Children will have a range of additional learning needs.

Children in these classes receive multidisciplinary support within the school environment.

Placements may be full or part-time and are subject to regular review.

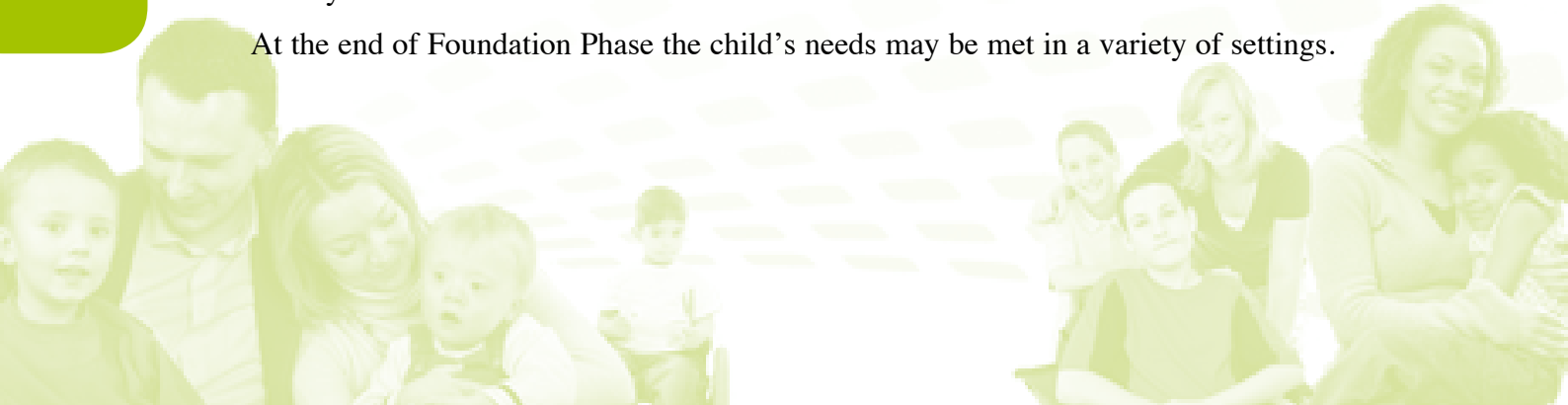
Foundation Phase LRB classes are situated in:

Goetre Primary School (2 classes)

Edwardsville Primary School

Coed y Dderwen School

At the end of Foundation Phase the child's needs may be met in a variety of settings.



- **KS2 Learning Resource Bases (KS2 LRB)**

Classes for children aged 7 to 11 years are situated in some junior and primary schools. They provide for children who have additional learning needs. The teacher/pupil ratio is higher than in mainstream classes (1 teacher to 15 children). Each LRB class also has an LSA.

KS2 Learning and Resource Bases are situated in:

Edwardsville Primary School
 Goetre Primary School (2 classes)
 Dowlais Primary School
 Twynnyroddyn Community School
 Ynysowen Primary School
 Ysgol y Graig Primary

In addition, there is a Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties Resource Base (SEBD RB) at Goetre Primary School.

Placement is based on the recommendation of an educational and child psychologist in consultation with parents and school.

- **Speech and Language Class**

This class provides for children who have a speech and language disorder and/or who show evidence of a significant discrepancy between speech and language skills and ability in other important significant areas.

- **Hearing Impairment Class**

This class provides for children who have a hearing impairment.

The speech and language class and Hearing Impairment Classes are based at Ynysowen Primary School.

- **Communication Difficulties Classes**

There are two classes providing for children with communication difficulties. These classes are based at Caedraw Primary School. One class caters for Foundation Phase pupils and the other for KS2 pupils. The teacher/pupil ratio is higher than in mainstream classes : 1 teacher to 8 children, plus an LSA.

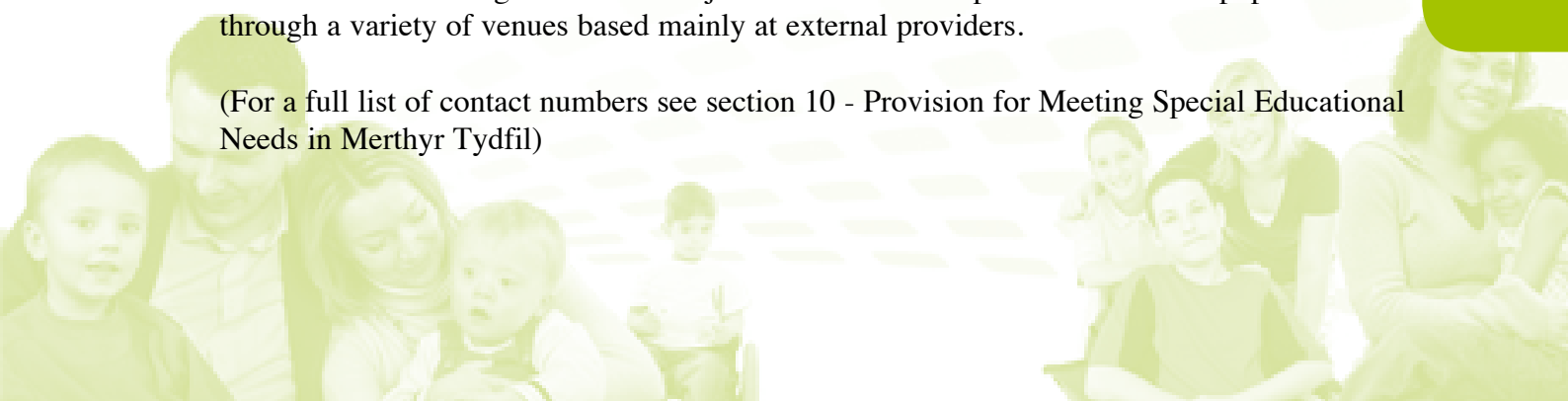
- **Special School**

Greenfield is a day school providing education for children and young people with a wide range of learning difficulties. It caters for pupils from 2-19 years of age. The school is organised into primary, secondary and post 16 departments. Classes offer a favourable teacher/pupil ratio.

- **Education Other Than At School Programme (EOTAS)**

EOTAS provides a programme tailored to the educational and vocational needs of pupils on its register. It offers full and part time provision for those pupils aged 11-16 years of age, who are experiencing behavioural difficulties in school. Teachers in EOTAS work very closely with schools in the teaching of the core subjects. The rest of the provision for these pupils will run through a variety of venues based mainly at external providers.

(For a full list of contact numbers see section 10 - Provision for Meeting Special Educational Needs in Merthyr Tydfil)



- **Learning Support Departments in Comprehensive Schools**

Each comprehensive school makes arrangements for meeting the needs of children and young people who may have a variety of learning difficulties. Each school's SEN policy will provide details of their provision. Schools may also give further information and guidance through such documents as the school brochure or school admission arrangements.

Each secondary school has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). (See section 4 - Mainstream Schools and Special Educational Needs).

Learning Support Departments

Afon Taf High School
 Bishop Hedley RC High School
 Cyfarthfa High School
 Pen-y-Dre High School

Afon Taf High School also has a specialist unit which caters for those:

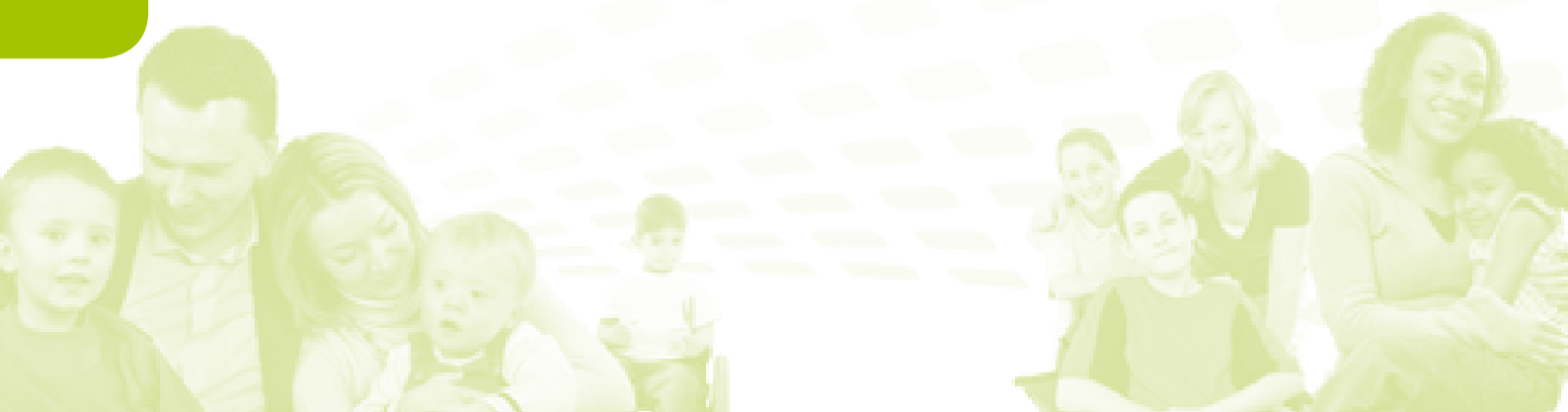
- pupils with hearing impairment;
- pupils for whom a speech and language disorder is the major presenting difficulty;
- pupils with social and communication difficulties.

Cyfarthfa High School has special adaptations to meet the needs of those with physical difficulties.

- **Special School**

Greenfield is a day school providing education for children and young people with a wide range of learning difficulties. It caters for pupils from 2-19 years of age. The school is organised into primary and secondary departments. Classes offer a favourable teacher/pupil ratio.

(For a full list of contact numbers see section 10 - Provision for Meeting Special Educational Needs in Merthyr Tydfil.)



Some young people, including those attending Greenfield School continue to attend school until the age of 19. Merthyr Tydfil upholds the concept of lifelong learning, offering educational opportunities for all children and young people.

The Careers Service employs a Special Needs Career Adviser who provides advice on the range of options available to school leavers from 14+.

Contact number – 01685 358180 – Jenny Miller, Careers Centre, 27 High Street, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8DP.

If your child has a statement this remains valid as long as he/she continues at school.

Merthyr College has a Special Educational Needs Department, which provides courses and support for students with learning difficulties.

Contact number – 01685 726037 – Judith Mulry

Greenfield School provides an individual accredited post 16 provision for pupils of all abilities which is supported by Merthyr College.



(For details see sections 7 and 8)

Foundation Phase

Learning Resource Bases

Goetre Primary School (2 classes), Rowan Way, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351814

Edwardsville Primary School, Cardiff Road, Edwardsville, Treharris
Tel: (01685) 351824

Coed y Dderwen School, Gellideg Estate, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel (01685) 722916

Communication Difficulties:

Caedraw Primary School (2 classes), Caedraw Road, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 727482

Speech and Language Class

Hearing Impairment Class

Ynysowen Primary School, Aberfan, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 728994

Key Stage 2 :

Edwardsville Primary School, Cardiff Road, Edwardsville, Treharris
Tel: (01685) 351824

Goetre Primary School (2 classes), Rowan Way, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351814

Dowlais Primary School, High Street, Caeharris, Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 722286

Twynrodyn Primary School, Walters Terrace, Twynrodyn, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 358270

Ynysowen Primary School, Aberfan, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 728994

Ysgol-y-Graig Primary, Cefn Coed, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 723159



Secondary Learning Support Departments

Afon Taf High School, Yew Street, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351830

Bishop Hedley R C High School, Gwaunfarren Road, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 722027

Cyfarthfa High School, Cae Mari Dwn, Queens Road, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 721725

Pen-y-dre High School, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351845

Secondary Learning Resource Base for Hearing Impairment, Speech and Language, Communication Difficulties

Afon Taf High School, Yew Street, Troedyrhiw, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351830

Special School

Greenfield Special School, Duffryn Road, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01443) 690468 Age 3-19 Provision

Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties :

Goetre Primary School, Rowan Way, Gurnos Estate, Merthyr Tydfil
Tel: (01685) 351814



What is a statutory assessment?

It is a detailed investigation to find out exactly what your child's special educational needs are and what additional help your child needs.

The LA will consider very carefully your child's progress at school and the guidance in the SEN Code of Practice for Wales. The LA will also listen to your views, your child's views and to the views of the school about your child's special educational needs. The school or early years setting will tell the LA about any additional help they have already given to your child.

Very few children will require a statutory assessment.**Your local Parent Partnership Service (SNAP) is there to help you at any point.**

If the school, health services or social services department consider that your child needs to be assessed, after consulting with you, they will request an assessment. **You** may also request a statutory assessment.

The LA will consider whether to carry out a statutory assessment of your child and will write to you :

- informing you that they are considering whether to make an assessment;
- explaining the procedures to be followed;
- providing the name of an LA officer who can give you more information (a 'named officer');
- explaining your right, within a stated time limit, to agree or disagree with the proposal and to invite you to send written views within 29 days;
- explaining the role of the local parent partnership service and the independent parental supporter.

The LA will also inform :

- the headteacher of your child's school or educational setting;
- the local social services department;
- the health authority.

The LA will look at the request for a statutory assessment and will tell you (normally within six weeks) whether they will carry out an assessment.



WHAT CAN YOU DO IF THE LA DECIDE NOT TO ASSESS YOUR CHILD?

If the LA decides not to carry out a statutory assessment of your child, they must write and tell you and the school their reasons. You or the school may still feel that more needs to be done to meet your child's educational needs. You should talk to the school to find out what can be done. They may consider different arrangements or outside help will be appropriate. You can also talk to the local parent partnership service. Even if the LA decides that your child does not need a statutory assessment, your child can still get additional help. You may need to discuss this with the school.

If the LA decides not to carry out a statutory assessment and you disagree with the LA's decision, you have a right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

THE ASSESSMENT

If the LA carries out an assessment, it will ask a number of professionals to give their views on your child. The LA will ask for advice from :

- you and, if appropriate, your child
- your child's school or early education setting
- an educational and child psychologist
- a doctor (usually the community paediatrician)
- social services (who will give advice only if they know your child)
- anyone else whose advice the LA considers appropriate

You have the right to be present at any discussions, medical or other test during the statutory assessment, but sometimes the professionals may ask to see your child without you. Children sometimes behave differently when a parent is present.

You should feel free to suggest any other people or organisations you know whose views may be helpful in the assessment of your child. The LA should then ask for their views. You may also send the LA any private advice or opinions you have collected about your child. The LA should take these into account as part of the assessment. (See Section 14 - Parental Advice Guidelines)

What happens after the assessment?

The LA may decide it is necessary to write down all the information they have collected in a document. This may be a Note in Lieu or a Statement of Special Educational Needs.



- A Note in Lieu

A note in lieu is not a legal document. After the assessment, the LA may decide that your child's school can provide additional help for your child without the need for a statement. However, the LA will have learned a great deal about your child's needs as a result of the statutory assessment. The note in lieu will share what they have learned with you and your child's school, recommending strategies for meeting your child's needs.

- A Statement of Special Educational Needs (Statement)

A statement is a legal document. It describes all of your child's needs and all the additional help that they need. Your child's ordinary school can usually provide this help with support from the LA.



Your advice will give relevant information, which will make a valuable and effective contribution to your child’s assessment. The report may be as long or as short as you wish. A friend or family member may help you write it. Sign the report and keep a copy. If you prefer, you may discuss your views with your Independent Parental Supporter who can write the report, on your behalf, providing you with a copy to sign (See Section 13 – Statutory Assessment Procedures for details).

The advice can tell us everything that you feel is important about your child’s needs, strengths and difficulties. You may find it helpful to give your views on some of the following points.

Information about things that have happened in your child’s life that might be important for us to know.

Your child’s general health – eating, sleeping, serious illnesses, accidents, hearing or sight problems. Physical skills – walking, running, climbing, riding a bike, playing games, drawing, writing, jigsaws etc.

Your child’s personal independence – dressing, getting out and about.

Communication skills – chats to you, explains and describes things, gives reasons, joins in conversations etc.

What does your child enjoy doing at home and outside of the home?

How does your child get on with other family members and friends?

What is your child good at?

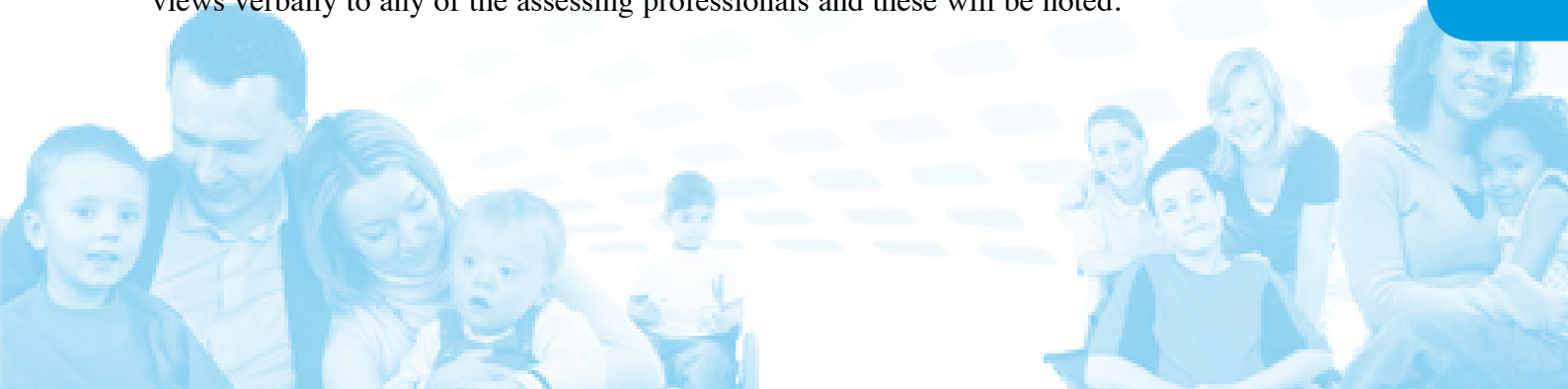
How does your child behave at home?

What things worry your child?

How do you feel that these worries and concerns can be met in school?

What are your hopes for your child, whilst at school and afterwards?

Whilst a parental report is most useful to the LA when conducting the assessment, it is not compulsory. The assessment will proceed once parents have given permission. You can give your views verbally to any of the assessing professionals and these will be noted.



Contents of a Statement

Before completion of the final statement you will receive a proposed, or draft statement. All the parts listed below will be filled in, except part 4 (describing the type and name of the school) which will be left blank.

- Part 1** Provides information about your child's name and address, your child's date of birth, home language and religion.
- Part 2** Gives details of all your child's special educational needs as identified in the statutory assessment.
- Part 3** Describes :
- all the additional help that the LA thinks your child should get to meet the needs listed in part 2;
 - what the long-term aims are;
 - the arrangements for setting short-term goals, regularly reviewing your child's progress toward those goals, and how your child's progress is to be monitored.
- Part 4** Informs you of the school your child will attend to get the additional help set out in part 3, or how any arrangements will be made out of school hours.
- Part 5** Describes any non-educational needs your child has, as agreed between the LA and health services, social services or other agencies.
- Part 6** Describes how your child will get help to meet the non-educational needs described in Part 5.



The Annual Review of the Statement

You will always be welcome at your child's school to discuss any concerns or anxieties. Every year, the school will formally review your child's progress and you will be invited to attend this meeting.

The headteacher will request written reports from you and others involved with your child. Targets will have been set by the school and the review will consider the progress made towards achieving these. New targets will be agreed for the following year. It may be felt by everyone that your child has made such good progress that he or she needs less help than before, or that special help is no longer necessary. At the Annual Review, changes may be made to the statement based on the progress made. It may even be felt that the statement is no longer required.

The LA will formally write to you with any proposed changes to the existing statement. **You will have 15 days to notify the LA of your opinion of the recommendations.**

REVIEW AT YEAR 9 - The Transitional Review/Plan

The Annual Review in Year 9 is especially important. It will consider future options including college placement, training and work experiences. Careers Wales will be actively involved from now on, as will Social Services if appropriate. All those working with your child will draw up a Transition Plan setting out the options for life beyond 16. Your and your child's views are very important and will be reflected in the plan.

REASSESSMENT

The review is an excellent opportunity to discuss your child's educational needs and future provision. It is very important that you are happy and in agreement with any proposed changes suggested. If you are concerned about anything and after discussion with the school, you may request a reassessment. If the LA agrees and an assessment has not been made in the last 6 months, then a reassessment will be carried out.



What is the Special Educational Needs Tribunal?

The Special Educational Needs Tribunal is an independent body that hears parents' appeals against LA decisions on statutory assessments and statements.

You can appeal to the SEN Tribunal if:

- the LA refuses to carry out a statutory assessment of your child after you have asked them to;
- the LA refuses to make a statement for your child after an assessment;
- you disagree with part 2, part 3 or part 4 of your child's statement, when that statement is first made or if it is changed later;
- your child already has a statement, and the LA refuses to assess your child again or to change the name of the school in that statement;
- the LA decides to stop your child's statement.

The SEN Tribunal is based in Llandrindod Wells. You may wish to contact the LA or Parent Partnership Service for further information on the SEN Tribunal.

A copy of the booklet '**SEN Tribunal**', is available from :



SEN Tribunal for Wales
 Unit 32
 Ddole Road Enterprise Park
 Llandrindod Wells
 Powys
 LD1 6PF
 Helpline : 01597 829800
tribunalenquiries@wales.gsi.gov.uk



ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

Admission arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs but without statements, are the same for all pupils. Applications are considered on the basis of the Authority's admission criteria. Children and young people with special educational needs will not be discriminated against because of these special educational needs.

If a child or young person has a statement of special educational needs maintained by the LA, the LA will be responsible for arranging the special educational provision and for considering the school's suitability when either finalising the statement or following an annual review. If the parent of a child or young person with a statement wishes to appeal against the school named in the statement or that no school has been named, an appeal can be made to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal (School Admission Welsh Office Code of Practice April 1999).

TRANSPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Free transport is provided for children and young people with special educational needs who require specialist provision not available in their local schools, irrespective of family circumstances. Specialist provision includes the special school, learning resource bases (Foundation Phase and KS2), social emotional and behavioural difficulties unit, communication unit and the hearing impaired unit.



If you wish to contact the school or the LA in writing, please ensure that the letter is dated and a copy is kept. Your child's details should be clearly written, including name, date of birth, address and school.

If you telephone the school or LA make a note of details of the conversation.

Keep all the information about your child together in a folder, including all the letters you send and receive.

In addition to school staff, the following LA staff may also be of assistance.

Additional Learning Needs Manager - Teresa Winiarski
(01685) 724642

Educational and Child Psychologists :

The Educational and Child Psychology Service is headed by the following:

Principal Education Psychologist	Andrea Higgins
Senior Education Psychologist	Sue Jablonski
Senior Education Psychologist	Hayley Jeans

The Service may be contacted on (01685) 724616 or (01685) 724642

Learning Support Team :

Principal Officer, SEN Admin, Statutory Assessment, Specialist School Placement, Parenting/
Family Support & EHE

Danielle Jones (01685) 724642

Advisory Teacher, SEN (Hearing, Speech & Language, Vision SpLD & Language Support

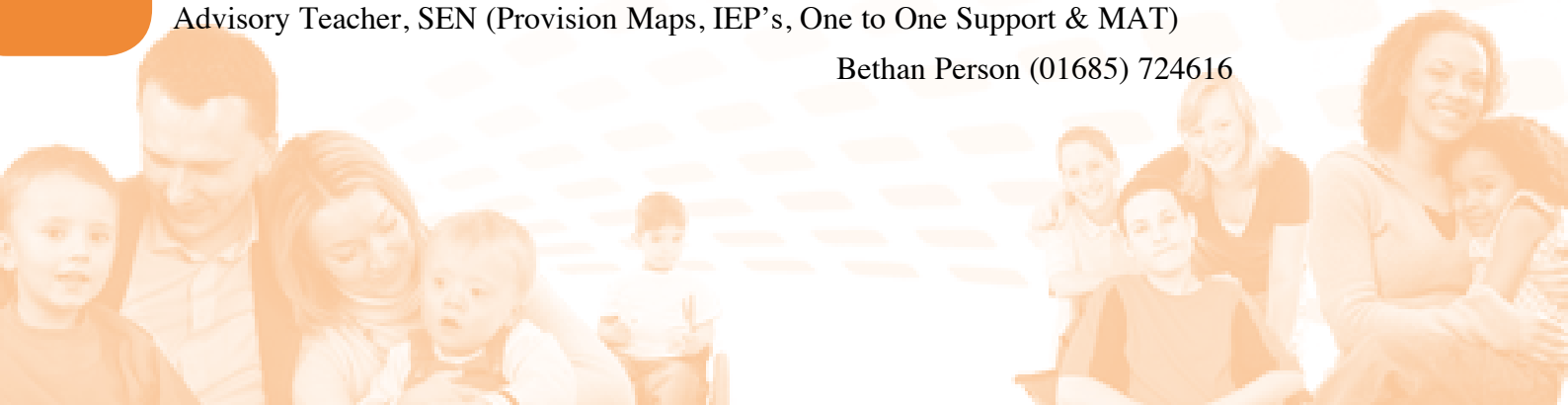
Alison Devereux (01685) 724616

Advisory Teacher SEN - (LRB's, Physical, Medical & Sensory difficulties, Early Years &
Transition into School)

Lisa Beattie (01685) 724616

Advisory Teacher, SEN (Provision Maps, IEP's, One to One Support & MAT)

Bethan Person (01685) 724616



SERVICES / PEOPLE INVOLVED WITH MY CHILD'S ASSESSMENT / STATEMENT

This form will help you keep a record of useful organisations and people and services who are involved in the assessment of your child.

Name (Person/Service)	Address	Tel. No	Comments
Class Teacher			
Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)			
Headteacher			
Educational and Child Psychologist			
Advisory Teacher			
Portage Worker			
Named Person			
Health Worker			
Doctor			
Speech and Language Therapist			
Other			



There are numerous organisations providing advice and services for children and young people with special needs. For information contact: The Acting Educational and Child Psychologist, Ty Keir Hardie, Merthyr Tydfil, Tel : 01685 724642 Fax : 01685 721965

After-School Clubs and Playschemes - for information on accessing playschemes and after school clubs



Diane James
Play Forum Voluntary Centre,
89-90 High Street, Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH



01685 353963



playforum@welshnet.co.uk

or

Contact

Christine Butler of 'Bridging the Gap' - a scheme for pupils aged 11 years+



07870 855230

Barnardos Merthyr Partnership - offering aftercare for people in need. The centre is situated



56 High Street
Pontmorlais
Merthyr Tydfil

Contact:

Marion Hewitt



01685-382422

Services include:

Young Carers - promoting the rights of young carers.

Contact:

Vicky Bannon



01685-382422

British Dyslexia Association - ensuring dyslexic persons receive proper teaching, help and support to achieve their potential.

Contact:

Helpline



0845 2519002



www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk / helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Cerebral Palsy (All Wales)

Contact:

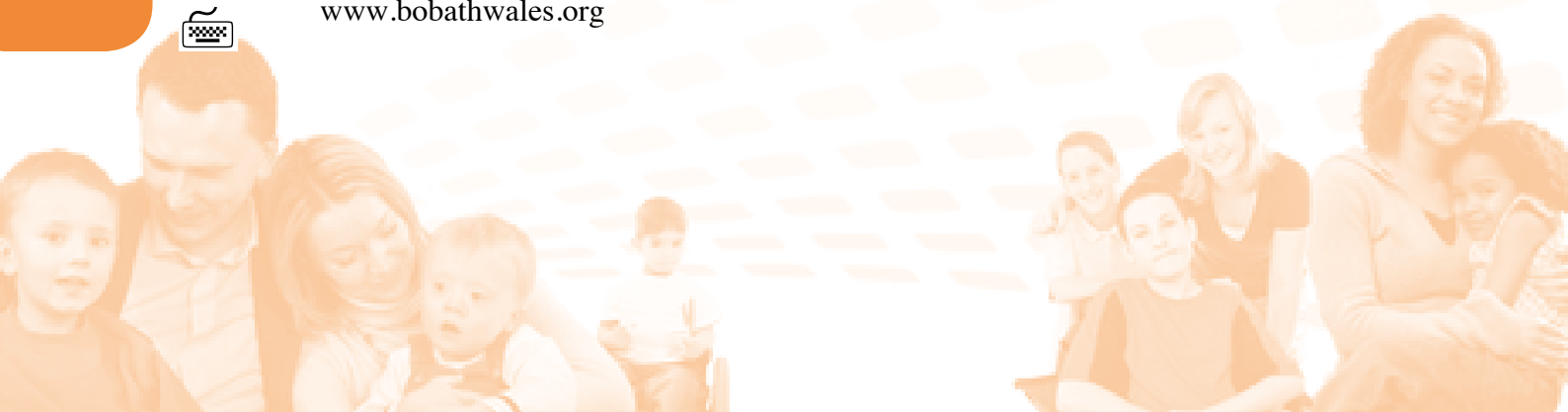
Bobath Childrens Therapy Centre (Wales)



029 20 522600



www.bobathwales.org



Children with Disabilities Team

Contact: Unit 5, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil CF48 4TQ
01685 727393



Epilepsy Wales - to set up services for people with epilepsy.



Epilepsy Wales Helpline : 0800 2289016



www.epilepsy-wales.co.uk

Family Information Service – provides free advice and information on a wide range of childcare options and activities for children age 0-19, their families and carers.



Contact: 01685 727400



www.merthyrfis.org

Merthyr Mencap Society - campaigning for better services for children and young people with learning disability.



01685 721729

Merthyr Institute for the Blind - providing employment and training for disabled persons.



01685-370072



www.mtib.co.uk



M.T.I.B.

Unit 4, Triangle Business Park,
Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 4TQ

National Autistic Society - a support group for teachers/carers who look after a person who has autism.



02920 629312



www.autism.org.uk/wales

cymru@nas.org.uk

Parent Carers United - an established support group of parents and carers in Merthyr Tydfil.

Contact: Lynda Coombes



07780826655



lyndacoombes10@aol.co.uk

Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied (PHAB), Merthyr Tydfil - promoting and encouraging young people with or without disabilities to integrate in all aspects of the community.



www.phab.org.uk



Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) - providing advice and raising awareness for people with a visual impairment.

Contact: RNIB Cymru
029 20 450440



Trident Court, East Moors Rd.
Cardiff CF24 5TD
www.rnib.org.uk



Action on Hearing Loss (formerly Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)) - improving the lives of deaf and hearing impaired through information and campaigning.

Contact: Textphone 0808 808 9000
0808 808 0123
www.actionhearingloss.org.uk



0300 3309250
Textphone 0300 3309251
www.sense.org.uk



Contact: Sense: National Deaf Blind and
Rubella Association

Scope Response

Contact: 02920 815450
www.scope.org.uk/wales-cymru



Special Needs Advisory Project (SNAP) - promoting equal partnership between parents and professions.

0845 1203730
www.snapcymru.org



10 Coopers Yard,
Curran Road, Cardiff CF10 5NB



Special Educational Needs Transition to Employment Team - aims to motivate young people and others in their life to prepare for the future by working with them to raise aspirations, increase participation in social, learning, volunteering and employment opportunities. Merthyr Tydfil is one of 9 Local Authorities that provide this service.

Contact: Karyn Morris
01685 724658



Youth Service – provides a wide range of learning opportunities for young people aged 11-25

Contact: 01685 727080



Town Centre Youth Provision
Bus Station Building, Castle Street
Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8BB



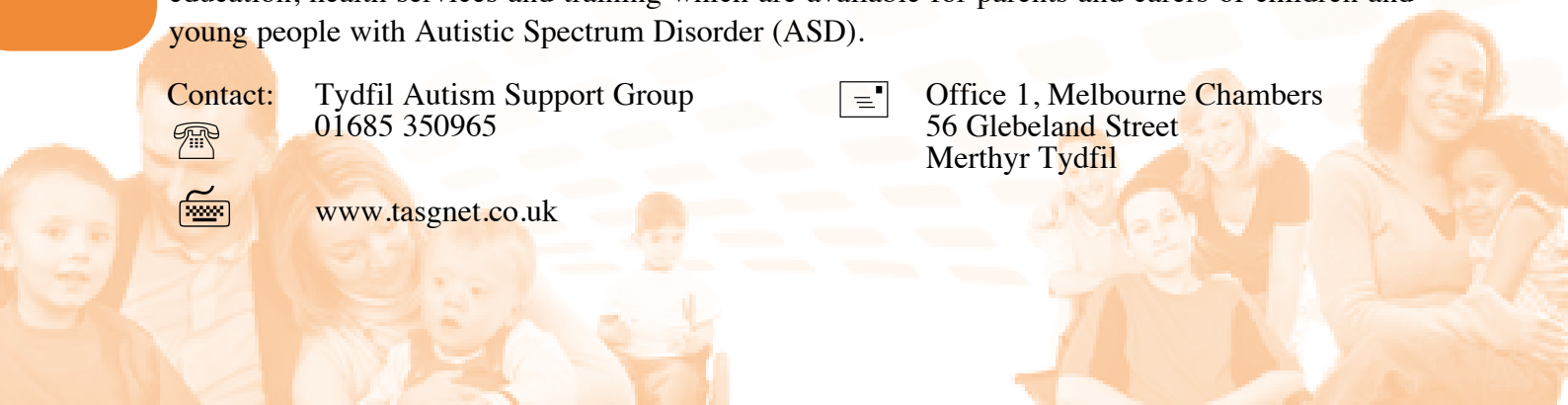
Tydfil Autism Support Group (TASG) – provides support, advice and guidance regarding education, health services and training which are available for parents and carers of children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Contact: Tydfil Autism Support Group
01685 350965

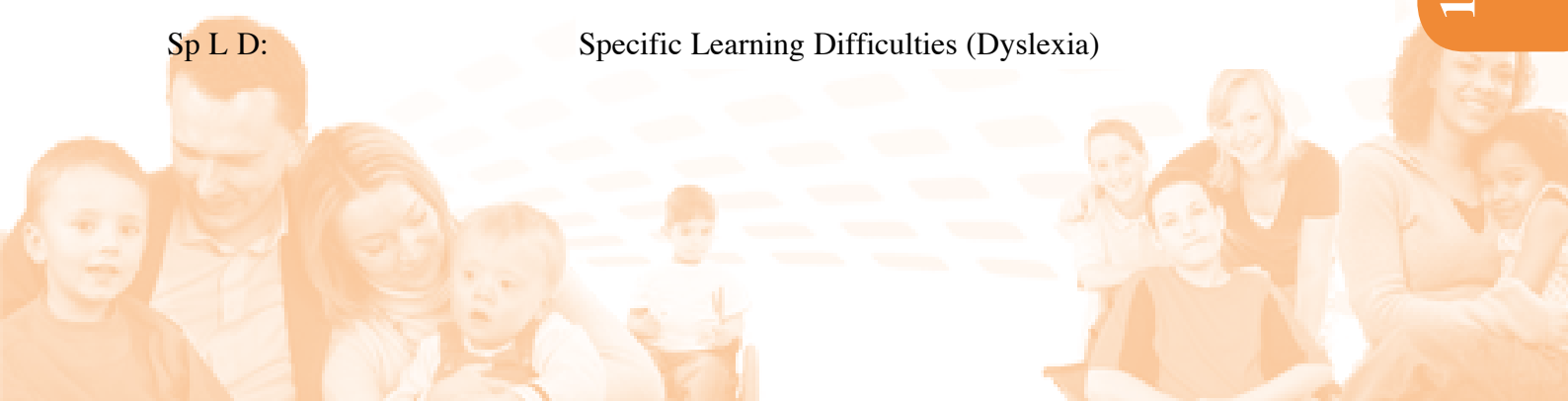


www.tasgnet.co.uk

Office 1, Melbourne Chambers
56 Glebeland Street
Merthyr Tydfil



Assessment:	The collection of information which builds up a picture of a child's needs and progress.
Code of Practice:	A guide for schools and LAs about the help they give to children with SEN.
National Curriculum:	This sets out a clear, full and statutory entitlement to learning for all pupils, determining what should be taught and setting attainment targets for learning.
SEBD	Social Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties
ECP	Educational and Child Psychologist
Hearing Impaired (HI):	Children with a hearing loss. It may be temporary or permanent, moderate or severe.
IPP:	Individual Play Plan
IEP:	Individual Education Plan
IBP :	Individual Behaviour Plan
LA	Local Authority
Learning Difficulty;	A child making slower progress than most children of the same age.
Mainstream School:	An ordinary school.
Maintained School:	A school maintained by the LA.
Named Person:	The person at the LA who deals with your child's case.
MLD:	Moderate Learning Difficulty
PMLD:	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
SEN:	Special Educational Needs
SLD:	Severe Learning Difficulties
SEN Provision:	The additional or different help given to children with special educational needs.
Special School:	A school which is specially organised to make special provision for pupils with special educational needs.
Sp L D:	Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia)



Statement of SEN:	A document that sets out a child's needs and all the additional help they should receive.
Transition Plan:	A plan drawn after the Year 9 annual review of the statement. It sets out the steps needed to move from school to adult life.
Tribunal:	An independent body that hears appeals against decisions made by the LAs on statutory assessments and statements.
Visually Impaired (VI):	A child who has impaired vision.
Voluntary Groups:	Often charities, local or national, offering information and support for the parents and families of young people with special educational needs.

