

A new system for Special Educational Needs

I am sure you will have heard in the media about changes in SEN legislation and provision which come into force this September. Statements of SEN for those with the most significant learning difficulties and disabilities will be phased out over the next year to be replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans. These should ensure that, where appropriate, provision from Health and Social Care will come under one umbrella and be part of one plan with Education. It is intended that young people and families should be at the heart of the system and that children and young people with SEN should be identified early.

What changes will we see?

The legal definition of what constitutes a special education need is not changed but the new SEN Code of Practice tries to draw a clearer line between those young people with a recognised learning difficulty or disability and those who may be making slower progress for a range of other reasons and who may respond well to quality, targeted teaching. By the same token, there will be children with SEN who are not lower attainers but whose difficulties are in other areas.

- Statements are to be phased out and replaced by EHC plans for those 2-3% with the most significant needs
- School Action and School Action Plus Stages to be replaced by one additional SEN Support category for those young people with SEN but without an EHC plan.
- Individual Education Plans are out but young people will have a school focused plan or Pupil Passport with a more child-centred approach
- There will be the opportunity for at least termly review meetings to look at plans and provision in place.
- A Local Offer which sets out in detail what each Local Authority overall and each individual school in particular intends to provide for children and young people with SEN. This will be published in September on Cheshire East's web site and on our school's web site.

What will not change?

At Brine Leas we have always operated a Learning Support Department: a large team who have catered for youngsters with a wide range of additional and sometimes quite temporary needs.

Within our suite of rooms we will continue to provide support for:

- Students with short term or longer term medical needs which may restrict their access to classes
- Students who may have been absent or need to catch up with work
- Students re-integrating after a protracted absence
- Students on a reduced timetable who need study support
- Students with social, emotional or behavioural issues that are not related to a special educational need.

In many ways I expect it will be business much as usual insofar as the level and quality of support we are able to provide now will not change. However, if you do have any concerns, please contact me at school by telephone or email info@brineleas.co.uk

Rob Morris

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