

Specialist Teaching and Psychology Service (STePS) Early Years SEND Team Information for Parents of children in Early Years (EY) provision

The STePS EY SEND Team work together with SENCO's and staff in Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) Early Years Settings across Derby City. We provide advice about supporting a child's learning and development in their setting when they might have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Settings can refer children to us when they are 3 years old. They can discuss the needs of children before they are 3 years old if they have concerns, and we might agree that it would be appropriate to refer them to us from 2 years and 6 months. We would expect the setting to be able to provide clear evidence to us about the concerns relating to your child's development.

A member of staff will have already discussed with you that there are some concerns about the development of your child, giving you the opportunity to discuss whether you have any concerns as well.

They may have already worked with you to identify some suggestions of things to try both in nursery and at home to help your child (as set out in the statutory guidance: the SEND Code of Practice) before reviewing this with you to discuss whether these suggestions are helping.

If you both think that your child is finding it hard to make progress with the suggestions that have been tried, or the staff at the setting are not sure about what to try next, they will discuss with you about making a referral to our team.

The referral will be discussed at an EY panel and if agreed that it meets the criteria for our involvement then the link person from our team will arrange to visit the setting, see your child there and speak to a key worker to get more information about your child and what support has already been implemented.

Further suggestions, advice and strategies will be suggested to staff. You will also get a copy of anything that we provide in writing to the setting about your child. Staff at the setting should let you know that we have arranged a visit and also feedback to you about our visit.

Further visits will be arranged with the setting when they need additional support or advice. This support and the regularity will vary depending on the needs of your child. The type of support will vary – it might be modelling how to introduce an unfamiliar strategy, helping them with identifying and setting targets to work towards, help with paperwork to evidence your child's needs or joining meetings with other services. The setting might also have telephone support instead to discuss ideas and suggestions.

All of the support that is provided contributes to a process called the Graduated Response. It's likely that the setting will have discussed this with you and will have started a Graduated Response File, where they can keep all of the important information about your child and their needs in one place that is accessible to all of the staff in the setting who need to know the best way to help your child. This information may then go on to support a request for an Education Health Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA) to the Local Authority to decide whether your child needs an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) if this is an appropriate next step to take.

We may arrange to also meet with you at nursery, or we may talk to you on the phone. You are always able to contact the person from our team who is involved with your child to ask any questions you might have. The setting can provide you with contact details or you can contact our admin team on stepsadmin@derby.gov.uk or 01332 641400 and they can let you know the name and contact details for the person linked to your child's setting.

Our team will stay involved until your child transfers to a Maintained setting (school or nursery) as long as they continue to meet the criteria.

If you have any questions about the role of The STePS EY SEND Team, then you can either ask to speak to the link person for your child's setting, or you can contact me by email on lynn.brierley@derby.gov.uk or by phone 07812 301237.