Gateshead’s Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (Area SENCos)

Supporting Early Identification and Intervention
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Background

The Area SENCo Team in Gateshead provides support, advice, training and information to schools, pre-schools, playgroups, childminders receiving two/three year old funding and private day nurseries on inclusive practice for children with Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to help make sure that all children are fully included within the setting.

Gateshead is committed to providing effective early identification and intervention for children with Special educational needs and disabilities. It is essential that all children with SEND have their needs identified as early as possible and the aim is to provide early intervention programmes to help remove barriers to learning.

Gateshead have an Area SENCo team of two SEN and Inclusion Consultants, both teachers and specialists in SEN and disabilities. They are part of educationGateshead. The principle focus of their role is to support all early years settings and schools in the early identification and intervention for children with Special education needs and disabilities.

Schools and early years settings can seek advice from the Area SENCo Team at the first signs of a concern. The Area SENCo team is flexible and reactive and there is no lengthy referral process.

The purpose and aims of the Area SENCo Team include:

- Empowering all those working in early years settings and schools, including childminders to respond to and meet the diverse needs of children in their care.
- Helping to meet the needs of children with SEN and disabilities as soon as possible through observational assessment, advice and support.
- Dissemination high quality, inclusive practice across settings and schools.
- Providing day to day support to practitioners and early years SENCos in the implementation of the Code of practice for Special educational needs.
- Facilitating strong links between the school or setting, Early Years Assessment and Intervention Team, Health and Social services.
- Supporting the successful inclusion and admission, of children with SEN and disabilities.
- Delivering high quality training to teachers, practitioners and child minders to support children with SEN or disabilities.
- Providing a continuous SENCo training programme ensuring a fully qualified SENCo in every early years setting.
- Supporting schools and settings to implement the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice for SEN.
- Promoting effective communication with parents, ensuring a shared dialogue between professionals and parents.
- Providing guidance and support for referrals to additional services for example Gateshead Early Years Assessment and Intervention Team or specialist health services such as Speech and language therapy or Occupational therapy.
- Monitoring and reviewing children's progress and supporting successful transitions between settings and schools.

Responsibilities

All providers of Early Years settings must have regard to the SEN Code of Practice, which describes how help for children with SEN should be made. All settings and schools should have a named SENCo and a SEN policy. The SENCo in the setting has responsibility for drawing up and implementing the setting's SEN Policy covering issues of inclusion and admissions. The manager of the setting has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the SEN policy is put into effect. All staff in the setting should support the SENCo in their role and contribute to the SEN policy. Area SENCos will ensure that training provided to the setting SENCo and to all staff in the setting, wherever possible, in order to create a common understanding of SEN and Disability.

Frequency of visits

The Area SENCos will aim to offer each PVI setting and school an annual monitoring visit. Settings and schools can request additional visits for advice regarding individual children at any time. There is no referral process, schools and settings just need to contact their attached Area SENCo by e-mail or phone to request a visit. Advice by telephone is also available at all times.

What happens during an Area SENCo Visit?

- Where a concern relates to a child, the Area SENCo will carry out a short observation and view relevant information such as observations, development plans, Individual Action Plans and reviews.
- The Area SENCo may arrange to meet with the parent/carer with the setting’s SENCo to discuss any concerns and strategies that can be used within the home and also to share information about other agencies that can help and to gain consent if a joint visit or referral to another agency is required.
- The Area SENCo will discuss with key worker and/ or SENCo the strategies and action to take, that will ensure the child is included within the setting and is able to make progress.
- Where the visit relates to general support and advice, the Area SENCo will meet with the SENCo or manager to offer related materials and equipment, inform the setting of training available or consider facilitating a short training session with the staff group.
- Following the visit the area SENCo will complete a short report, clearly listing the actions that are required and the individuals responsible for undertaking the work.
### Jean Thomspson

**Allocated Schools**

| Bensham Grove Nursery | Bill Quay Primary | Birtley East Primary | Blaydon West Primary | Brandling Primary | Brighton Avenue Primary | Clover Hill Primary | Emmaville Primary | Falla Park Primary | Fell Dyke Primary | Glynwood Primary | High Spen Primary | Kells Lane Primary | Kelvin Grove Primary | Larkspur Primary | Lingey House Primary | Ravensworth Primary | Riverside Academy | Roman Road Primary | Sacred Heart R.C Primary | South Street Primary | St Agnes R.C Primary |
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**Allocated PVI Settings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Care with Cuddles</th>
<th>Lyndhurst Childcare</th>
<th>St. Agnes Day Nursery</th>
<th>The Village Montessori</th>
<th>The Montessori at Felldyke</th>
<th>Ring O Roses Nursery</th>
<th>Tree Tops Nursery</th>
<th>Just Learning Day Nursery</th>
<th>Little Hearts Pre-School</th>
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### Melanie Vincent

**Allocated Schools**

| Barley Mow Primary | Bede Primary | Caedmon Primary | Carr Hill Primary | Chopwell Primary | Colegate Primary | Corpus Christie Primary | Crookhill Primary | Dunston Hill Primary | Fellside Primary | Front Street Primary | Greenside Primary | Harlow Green Primary | Highfield Primary | Kiblesworth Primary | Lobley Hill Primary | Oakfield Infants | Parkhead Primary | Portobello Primary | Rowlands Gill Primary | Ryton Infants | St Aidans C of E Primary | St Albans R.C Primary | St Augustines R.C Primary | St Josephs R.C Infants Birtley | St Josephs R.C Primary, Highfield |
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**Allocated PVI Settings**

| Bright Sparks Nursery | Rowlands Gill Pre-School | Saltwell Park Montessori | St Marys Duckpool Pre-School | St Philip Neri Pre-School | Stepping Stones Nursery | The Willows Montessori | Tik Tok Nursery | Trinity Corner Nursery | Washingwell Pre-School | Whickham Cottage Nursery | Little Acorns @Winlaton West Lane | The Valley Nursery | Blydon Pre-School | Bumble Bees Pre-School | 2nd Home Childcare | Little Owls Nursery | Cheder Primary | Kids 1st Nursery | Respect Pre-School | The Drive Primary | Whickham Parochial Primary | Cedars Academy | Eslington Primary |
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