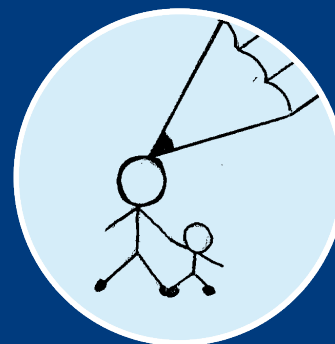


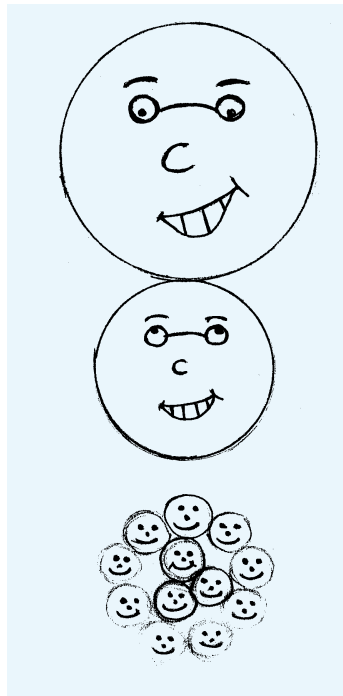
# Parent Partnership Service

# Help

if your child has  
Special  
Educational  
Needs



Putting **you** in the picture



This booklet is for parents and carers of children with special educational needs. It tells you about:

- the different groups of people who will help to provide what your child needs; and
- other groups that you can contact for extra support and information.

## Defining Special Educational Needs

Children with SEN all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age. These children may need extra help, or different help from that given to other children of the same age.

Children from Westfield Middle School, Bedford, drew the illustrations in this series of leaflets.

### 1. Early Years

Your Health Visitor or your GP (doctor) may suggest a referral to a child development centre:

#### **The Child Development Centre, Kempston**

Tel: 01234 310278  
(for children who live in north and mid Bedfordshire), or

#### **The Edwin Lobo Centre, Luton**

Tel: 01582 700300  
(for children who live in south Bedfordshire).

Child development centres have staff from both health and education with a lot of experience in helping children with special educational needs.

### 2. Schools

At your child's school, you can talk to:

- Your child's class teacher;
- The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo);
- The headteacher;
- The School Governor who is responsible for special educational needs.

The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) will know a lot about your child and will be able to explain to you what help the school is giving. They will also be able to explain the different stages of special needs support and tell you if there is anything you need to do.

The school may also ask for advice from other professionals, if this is needed.

### 3. The Local Authority

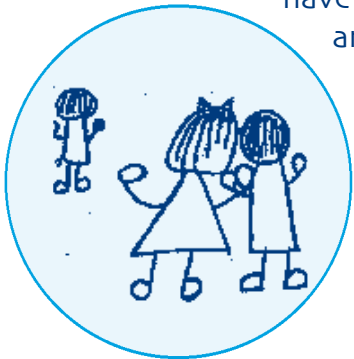
The school may call in help from the Local Authority, including:

- **The Assessment and Monitoring Team;**
- **Educational Psychologists; and**
- **Specialist Teachers.**

The law says that, in certain circumstances, the Local Authority must assess children with special educational needs to decide what help they need. This is called a "statutory assessment".

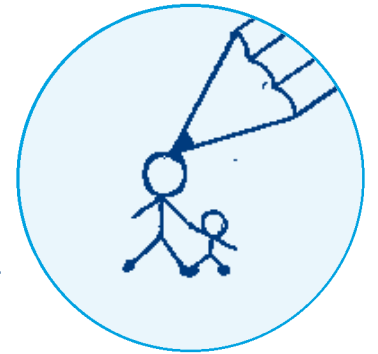
When an assessment shows that a school will need extra money to provide a child with special help the Assessment and Monitoring team will write a statement of special educational needs. If they are doing a statutory assessment of your child they will:

- contact you regularly during the assessment to keep you up to date with what is happening;
- answer any questions you may have about assessments and statementing.



### 4. Bedfordshire Parent Partnership Service

We provide free, confidential and impartial information to parents and carers of children with special educational needs. We are based at Westfield Middle School in Bedford and cover the whole of the county.



We provide information in a number of ways, for example:

- We operate a confidential helpline where you can get help and advice.
- We produce information leaflets.
- We hold monthly meetings to which we invite parents and carers whose children have special educational needs and are being assessed. At these meetings parents and carers meet a Parent Partnership Officer and an Assessment and Monitoring Officer. This gives them a chance to learn more about the statutory assessment process and to ask questions.
- We can help parents prepare for discussions with schools or the Local Authority.
- We can pass on details of other organisations and agencies that may help.
- We can help parents who are looking for a school for their child.

