

Applecroft School



SEND Information Report

Person Responsible	Assistant Headteacher
Review Cycle:	Annual
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Review Date:	March 2027

Applecroft School



SEND Information Report

Key Information

SENDCo (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator): Ms Ruth Johnson,
Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Wellbeing

Contact Details:

- **Phone:** 01707 323758 (via school office)
- **Email:** senco@applecroft.herts.sch.uk

SEND Trustee: Mrs Claire Coe

Mental Health Lead: Ms Ruth Johnson

Family Link Support Worker: Ms Jale Apicella

How to arrange a meeting: Contact the school office admin@applecroft.herts.sch.uk or email the SENDCo directly

Our Vision for SEND at Applecroft School

At Applecroft School we are ambitious for each and every child and believe that every individual deserves an outstanding education regardless of their starting points or individual barriers.

We are an inclusive school with the needs of the 'whole child' at the heart of all we do. We see every child as an individual with great potential and are relentless in our desire to support and nurture them to achieve their very best.

We passionately believe in equality and equity for all. Through a personalised approach to learning, starting with each child's strengths, we work proactively and collaboratively with parents to learn from each other and collectively provide the best possible opportunities, experiences and happy memories that will last a lifetime.

Our school SEND Information Report has been written with guidance from the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015) and should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy, which can be found on the school website. The SEND Information Report has been written collaboratively with

staff, governors and parents to form part of the Hertfordshire Local Offer and provides information about the help, support and services which are available to meet the needs of pupils at Applecroft School with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and to their families.

School SEND Context

In our school community we currently have (compared to Hertfordshire and National data):

% of pupils with SEND: 12.99% (Hertfordshire = 18.5%, National = 19.5%)

% of pupils with EHC plan: 2.86% (Hertfordshire = 4.3%, National = 5.3%)

% of pupils receiving SEND support: 10.13% (Hertfordshire = 14.2%, National = 14.2%)

Primary EHCP Need: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Primary SEND Support Need: Speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

Understanding the Four Broad Areas of SEND

The SEND Code of Practice identifies four broad areas of need. At Applecroft School, we use these categories to help us identify and plan support for children. A child may have needs in more than one area.

1. Communication and Interaction

This includes children who have difficulty communicating with others or understanding what is being said to them.

Examples include:

- **Speech and language difficulties** - A child may struggle to pronounce words clearly, have a limited vocabulary, or find it hard to form sentences
- **Autism** - A child may find social situations challenging, prefer routines, have difficulty understanding social cues, or process sensory information differently
- **Selective mutism** - A child may be unable to speak in certain situations despite speaking in others

How we support: Speech and language interventions, visual timetables, social stories, communication aids, structured routines, quiet spaces, and support from the Communication and Autism Advisory Team.

2. Cognition and Learning

This includes children who learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate adaptation and scaffolds.

Examples include:

- **Moderate learning difficulties (MLD)** - A child may need more time to grasp new concepts across several areas of learning
- **Severe learning difficulties (SLD)** - A child may need significant support with most areas of the curriculum
- **Specific learning difficulties (SpLD)** such as:
 - **Dyslexia** - difficulties with reading, writing and spelling
 - **Dyscalculia** - difficulties with numbers and mathematical concepts
 - **Dyspraxia** - difficulties with physical coordination and organisation

How we support: Scaffolded learning (see definition below), small group interventions, phonics and spelling programmes, memory strategies, multi-sensory teaching approaches, additional time for tasks, and use of assistive technology.

3. Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties

This includes children who experience challenges with their emotional wellbeing and social interactions.

Examples include:

- **Anxiety** - A child may experience excessive worry, panic attacks, or school-related anxiety
- **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)** - A child may find it difficult to concentrate, sit still, or control impulsive behaviour
- **Attachment difficulties** - A child may struggle to form trusting relationships with adults or peers
- **Mental health conditions** - Including depression, eating disorders, or self-harm

How we support: Pastoral support check-ins, 1 to 1 interventions, nurture provision in 'The Den', Zones of Regulation strategies, worry boxes, mindfulness activities, emotional literacy programmes, individual support plans, and referrals to CAMHS or Step 2 when appropriate.

4. Sensory and/or Physical Needs

This includes children who require special equipment or adaptations to access their learning.

Examples include:

- **Visual impairment (VI)** - A child may have reduced vision or be blind
- **Hearing impairment (HI)** - A child may have reduced hearing or be deaf
- **Physical disability** - A child may use a wheelchair, have cerebral palsy, or have limited mobility
- **Sensory processing difficulties** - A child may be over-sensitive or under-sensitive to sounds, textures, tastes, smells or visual stimuli

How we support: Specialist equipment, adaptations to the environment (ramps, accessible toilets), support from specialist advisory teachers (Team for Hearing Impaired, Team for Visually Impaired), sensory room access, movement breaks, ear defenders, wobble cushions, and occupational therapy or physiotherapy input.

Understanding Key Terms

What does 'scaffold' mean?

When we talk about 'scaffolding' learning, we mean providing temporary support structures that help children access learning at their level and gradually build their independence. Just like scaffolding on a building supports construction work and is removed when no longer needed, learning scaffolds are adjusted and reduced as the child develops skills and confidence.

Examples of scaffolding at Applecroft include:

- Breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps
- Providing visual aids, word banks or sentence starters
- Using concrete resources (e.g., counters, blocks) before moving to abstract concepts
- Offering additional adult support or pre-teaching of key vocabulary
- Providing writing frames or graphic organisers
- Giving extra time or reducing the amount of work required
- Using technology such as voice-to-text software

What does 'SMART targets' mean?

SMART targets are goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-bound (usually one term).

What is an 'Individual Learning Plan' (ILP)?

An Individual Learning Plan is a document that outlines the specific support, strategies and targets for a child with SEND. It includes 3-4 SMART targets and is reviewed termly with parents/carers and the child.

How Does the School Know if Children Need Extra Help?

According to the SEND Code of Practice (January 2015), a child or young person is identified with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) *"if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age"*.

At Applecroft, we track the progress of all of our children and have regular opportunities to discuss any concerns that we have, as well as to celebrate achievements. Where a child's progress and attainment is lower than expected, this will be investigated further. This may be in their academic attainment but may be in other areas within their wider development such as social needs.

Teachers and Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), alongside subject leaders and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo), use their experience and expertise to identify specific needs and to implement appropriate actions and reasonable adjustments to move the child forward.

If a teacher identifies a child whose needs are still not being met and who requires further support, they would then discuss this child with the SENDCo who will carry out an observation of the child and gather further information using special needs checklists, screeners or assessments

to further identify and understand their needs. The class teacher will inform parents of this SEND journey before this takes place.

Following these investigations, feedback will be provided to parents through a meeting with both the SENDCo and class teacher. If appropriate, a graduated approach 'Assess, Plan, Do, Review' (APDR) cycle will be discussed with parents/carers and an Individual Learning Plan put in place to identify further quality first teaching methods, strategies and resources which will be used to support the child. This will involve SMART targets being set that both school and parents agree to work towards to support the child to make progress. SMART targets are reviewed termly through meetings between the class teacher and parents/carers. In order to meet some of their SMART targets, further support through small group or 1:1 intervention work with a trained LSA might be appropriate. This will be discussed with the parent/carer as part of the Individual Learning Plan meeting and planned for accordingly.

At this stage, the child will also be added to the school SEND register where they are identified as receiving 'SEND support'.

The majority of children with special educational needs can be supported and provided for through school SEND support. But for a small number of children, it may become evident that SEND support is not sufficient and an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is needed in order to meet the needs of the child. An EHCP is a statutory assessment which builds on the coordinated work that is already happening between families, schools and other health and social care services involved with the child - it should not be the first step in the process of meeting the needs of the child. If your child is already receiving SEND support but you think that they may need an EHCP, please speak to your child's class teacher or the SENDCo to discuss this. Parents and carers have the right to apply for an EHC needs assessment independently, but, if appropriate to apply, a more comprehensive application can be submitted with school and parents/carers working collaboratively.

What Should I Do if I Think My Child May Have Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)?

If you are concerned about your child's progress or feel that they may have SEND then please speak with your child's class teacher initially, who will speak with the SENDCo to discuss your concerns.

Children's views are also very important and we encourage children at Applecroft to raise any concerns they have with their teacher, parents or the SENDCo and welcome discussions about their targets and the support that they need to achieve these.

How Children with SEND Are Involved in Decision-Making

At Applecroft School, we believe that children should be active participants in decisions about their education and support. We involve children with SEND in the following ways:

Giving Children a Voice

- **Individual Learning Plan meetings** - Children are invited to contribute their views about their targets, what helps them learn, and what they find difficult
- **Worry boxes** - Every class has a worry box where children can communicate concerns or anxieties
- **One-to-one discussions** - Children can speak with their teacher, LSA, or the SENDCo at any time about their learning or wellbeing
- **Annual Reviews** - For children with EHCPs, we gather the child's views (through age-appropriate methods such as drawings, conversations, or written responses) to include in the review process
- **Target setting** - Children help to identify what they would like to achieve and discuss the support they need
- **Provision choices** - Where appropriate, children can express preferences about how and where they receive support (e.g., in class or in a small group)

Developing Self-Advocacy

- **Understanding their needs** - We help children understand their own learning needs in an age-appropriate way
- **Emotional Bank Accounts** - Children use class EBAs to make positive 'deposits' in each other's accounts, building self-esteem
- **Leader in Me programme** - Children are encouraged to take responsibility and be proactive in their learning
- **Self-regulation strategies** - Children learn to recognise their emotions using Zones of Regulation and can request breaks or use calming strategies when needed

Feedback Mechanisms

- **Regular check-ins** - Teachers and LSAs regularly ask children how they are feeling about their learning and support
- **Provision reviews** - We gather feedback from children about whether interventions are helping them and what they enjoy or find challenging
- **Accessible communication** - For children who find verbal communication difficult, we use alternative methods such as visual aids, symbols, or communication apps

Children's views are valued and taken seriously. If a child expresses concerns about their support, we will work with them and their parents/carers to make adjustments.

How Will the School Staff Support My Child?

The first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEND is high quality teaching. Class teachers plan and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which is scaffolded to meet the needs of all pupils. If a child is identified as having SEND then the school will take steps to identify and remove barriers to learning and to put effective provision and reasonable adjustments or scaffolds in place. The class teacher will keep the parents/carers informed of SEND support and will also write and review the Individual Learning Plan targets and provision for children with SEND with parents on a termly basis.

Our LSAs are trained to support children primarily in their whole-class learning but also with a range of specific intervention programmes where this is appropriate.

The SENDCo is responsible for coordinating all of the support for children with SEND and developing the SEND policy to ensure that all children are receiving a consistent, high quality response to meeting their needs. They will work alongside the teacher to advise on resources and ensure that the needs of the child are being met. SEND support will be adapted or replaced as necessary depending on how effective it has been in achieving the agreed outcomes. The SENDCo will also liaise with other external professionals such as Speech and Language therapists and Educational Psychologists, who may come into school to help to support the learning of some children.

The Headteacher is responsible for the overall day to day management of all aspects of the school, and this includes the overall support for children with SEND.

The school has a trustee who is responsible for overseeing the SEND provision in the school, ensuring the Board of Trustees is kept informed about any progress/concerns in the school relating to SEND. Our School SEND Trustee is Mrs Claire Coe.

Provision is planned based on the needs of each individual child. Assessment data, observations and children's wellbeing, as well as teacher and parent feedback, are all taken into account to help to inform these decisions.

Parents/carers are involved from the beginning of the SEND journey and work collaboratively with staff to implement and develop Individual Learning Plans and SMART targets. Meetings take place between parents/carers and class teachers on a termly basis to review provision.

How Will I Know How My Child Is Doing?

Class teachers and the SENDCo review the learning of all children on a regular basis - this will include intervention progress, whole class progress towards age-related expectations (ARE) and their general wellbeing. This is formally reviewed each term but will be more frequent if there is a need to do so earlier.

As part of reviewing each child's learning, the provision in place to support the child is monitored and we review how much progress the child has made and if the intervention programme is having a positive impact, compared to their baseline when the intervention began. In addition to assessments, provision is monitored and reviewed through feedback from teachers, LSAs and the child.

Information about progress and provision is discussed with parents/carers in a number of ways:

- Termly Individual Learning Plan meetings take place between teachers and parents/carers to collaboratively review and feedback on progress and provision for children with SEND
- Annual reviews take place for children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which involve the SENDCo, teachers, parents/carers and outside professionals
- Class teachers will meet with parents/carers at Parent Consultations that take place in the autumn and spring terms for Years 1-6. For children in Nursery and Reception, class teachers

will meet with parents/carers following their child's focused observation week each term. At the end of each academic year, all children will receive a formal written report

- We run an 'open door' policy at Applecroft School and we encourage informal discussions between parents/carers and class teachers and communication through home-school link books
- You are also very welcome to make an appointment to meet with the SENDCo
- Where they are involved, we also arrange joint meetings with professionals and outside agencies

How We Evaluate the Effectiveness of SEND Provision

At Applecroft School, we take a rigorous approach to evaluating whether our SEND provision is making a difference for children.

Tracking Progress Over Time

We assess children's attainment and progress each term in reading, writing and maths, comparing their progress to age-related expectations and to their own previous assessments. We track progress in smaller steps for children working below age-related expectations and monitor social, emotional and behavioural development through observations and wellbeing assessments. We also keep records of attendance, as this can be an indicator of how well a child is coping.

Intervention Reviews

Before an intervention starts, we carry out a baseline assessment and set clear targets for what we expect the child to achieve. At the end of the intervention (usually after half a term), we reassess using the same measure and calculate the progress made (e.g., "reading age improved by 8 months in 12 weeks"). We gather feedback from the child, teacher and LSA about what worked well. This helps us see which interventions are most effective and make evidence-based decisions about which programmes to continue, adapt or stop.

Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Reviews

The class teacher, parents/carers and (where appropriate) the child meet each term to review whether the SMART targets have been met, partially met, or not yet achieved. We discuss what strategies and provision have been most helpful, celebrate successes and identify any barriers that remain. We then set new targets for the next term based on the child's current needs and agree on the provision and support that will be put in place.

Annual Reviews for Children with EHCPs

We gather written reports from school staff, parents/carers, and all professionals involved (e.g., speech therapist, educational psychologist) and collect the child's views about their progress. We hold a meeting (in person or virtually) to discuss progress towards EHCP outcomes and review whether the provision in the EHCP is still appropriate or needs to be changed. We send recommendations to the Local Authority who make the final decision about any changes to the EHCP.

Data Analysis and Comparison

We analyse attainment data (how children with SEND are performing compared to their peers at Applecroft and compared to national averages), progress data, attendance data, behaviour data and destination data (how well our Year 6 SEND pupils transition to secondary school).

Understanding our current data: Our percentage of pupils with SEND (12.99%) is lower than Hertfordshire (18.5%) and national (19.5%) averages. This suggests we may have fewer children with identified needs, or that our high-quality teaching is effectively supporting children before they require SEND support. Our percentage with EHC plans (2.86%) is lower than county (4.3%) and national (5.3%) averages, indicating fewer children with the most complex needs. We monitor whether children with SEND at Applecroft make similar progress to children with SEND nationally, and whether gaps are closing.

Trustee Monitoring and Governance

Our SEND Trustee, Mrs Claire Coe, provides independent oversight and challenge to ensure SEND provision is effective and well-led. This includes termly meetings between the SEND Trustee and SENDCo to review SEND data, provision and outcomes; learning walks where the trustee visits classrooms to see SEND support in action; document reviews of ILPs, provision maps and policies; discussions with parents and pupils to gather feedback; budget monitoring to ensure SEND funding is being used effectively; and reporting to the full Board of Trustees about SEND outcomes, challenges and priorities.

The impact of trustee monitoring: This provides accountability and ensures SEND remains a priority at leadership level, brings a fresh perspective and constructive challenge to our practice, ensures compliance with statutory duties, helps identify areas for development and celebrates successes, and gives parents confidence that SEND provision is being scrutinised and improved.

Parental and Pupil Feedback

We gather feedback through conversations during ILP meetings and parent consultations, questionnaires and surveys about SEND provision, pupil voice groups that include SEND representatives, informal feedback through our 'open door' policy, and feedback forms after Annual Reviews. This tells us whether families feel listened to, whether children are happy and confident, and what we could do better.

External Validation

External professionals bring specialist expertise and an objective view through reports and recommendations from educational psychologists, speech therapists and other specialists, Local Authority SEND reviews and audits, Ofsted inspections which evaluate SEND provision, and peer reviews with other schools.

Continuous Improvement

All of this evaluation feeds into our School Development Plan and SEND Action Plan. We use what we learn to invest in staff training in areas where we need to improve, introduce new interventions that have a strong evidence base, adjust our provision map to better meet the needs of our current cohort, celebrate and share what's working well, and ensure every child with SEND makes the best possible progress.

How Will the Learning and Development Provision Be Matched to My Child's Needs?

At Applecroft School, we ensure that high quality teaching is in place to meet the needs of all of our children. This is planned carefully, taking into account children's prior knowledge and

understanding, and building on this to allow every child to make progress. Lessons are scaffolded so that all children are able to access the lesson at their own level and reasonable adjustments are made to enable children to overcome some of the barriers they face to learning. Wherever possible the curriculum is adapted and personalised as we recognise that not all children learn in the same way.

When additional support is needed, the class teacher, with support from the SENDCo where necessary, will plan for activities that are specific to the child's targets. This may be through a range of specialist targeted interventions which are provided by our LSAs or through additional support, resources and adjustments in class such as wobble cushions, ear defenders or sensory toys.

Where they are involved, outside agencies will also set targets which the school will support and work on. SMART targets are monitored and reviewed with teachers, SENDCo (where involved), parents/carers and pupils at termly Individual Learning Plan meetings. Each term we plan the provision we feel will best benefit the child and after a term of carrying out this provision, we review what has/hasn't worked, assess where the child is now at and plan a suitable way forward.

The school works closely with parents/carers and children when discussing targets and provision in order to gain their consent and also to listen to parents/carers suggestions, as they know their children best. Children give consent to any interventions or reasonable adjustments made and can talk to an adult at any time if they want to seek clarity on why they are having it or to discuss their concerns if they don't want it.

What Support Will There Be for My Child's Overall Wellbeing?

Our Mental Health Lead Practitioner at Applecroft is Ms Ruth Johnson (Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion and Wellbeing).

At Applecroft we endeavour to nurture the potential of all children and place great importance on positive emotional wellbeing and social development through a range of different means.

Daily assemblies are held and these, alongside our PSHE scheme 'EC Publishing' and whole-school 'Leader in Me' initiative, promote emotional wellbeing and teach children the personal and practical skills which enable them to make positive life choices.

Within each class, children have a 'worry box' that they can use to communicate any worries or anxieties, and where appropriate anxiety mapping is used to explore these further with individual children. Children also have a class 'Emotional Bank Account' (EBA) that they use to make 'deposits' in each other's accounts.

We run programmes for children to develop social skills and to develop strategies to enhance self-esteem and friendships. We also have LSAs who are trained to support children to recognise and regulate their emotions, using the Zones of Regulation approach, and to implement calming strategies such as mindfulness.

Children have access to our Nurture Room, 'The Den', where they can work in small groups or on a 1:1 basis. To support children on the school playground at break and lunchtimes, we have 'Play Leaders' and Friendship Leaders' in place.

We endeavour to develop positive relationships between school, parents/carers and the child. Ms Jale Apicella is our Applecroft Family Link Support Worker and acts as a key point of contact between the school and home. Where appropriate we can signpost families to additional external support such as the Family Support Worker, School Nurse, CAMHS or PALMS.

We believe that all children have the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe, secure and respected, and our school Behaviour & Discipline and Anti-Bullying policies detail our clear expectations of behaviour. We support and encourage children to be leaders as part of the 'Leader in Me', and to take responsibility for their own behaviour through recognising and understanding that all behaviours have consequences. We also follow the Hertfordshire 'Therapeutic Thinking' approach to encourage positive behaviour.

At Applecroft School, we have clear procedures for supporting children with medical conditions and administering medication. Information on this can be found in our Administering Medicines policy. All policies are available on the school website.

What Training Have the Staff Supporting Children with SEND Had or Are Having?

We value training and development opportunities for all staff to continue to develop their knowledge and skills so that they can best support children with SEND.

The SENDCo holds the National Award for SEND Co-ordination (Achieved in November 2016). She continually updates her training and knowledge by attending relevant courses and feeds back to staff as necessary. The SENDCo also supports staff to most effectively plan for and teach children with SEND.

Staff attend relevant courses and training provided by Hertfordshire County Council and the local district when necessary as well as receiving relevant 'in house' training in a variety of areas. Individual staff are trained to teach different interventions to support specific children for example, phonics and spelling interventions, SMART Moves, SCERTS or Drawing and Talking therapy. Other training is delivered to support all staff to identify and support children with different aspects of SEND.

What Specialist Services and Expertise Are Available at or Accessed by the School?

Applecroft School works closely with a range of external agencies and specialist advisory staff to ensure that we are providing the best possible opportunities and educational experiences for our pupils. Dependent on the needs we are able to access the following services to be delivered within school:

- Educational Psychology
- Speech and Language therapists

- Team for Hearing Impaired
- Team for Visually Impaired
- Communication and Autism Advisory Team
- School Nursing Team
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Step 2
- Children's Services
- Children's Centre
- School Family Worker
- Virtual School

Support from external agencies can be discussed with the SENDCo, who can, if appropriate, talk to the relevant agency and make a referral. These discussions can come from teachers, parents/carers and children, and a referral can be made with everyone's consent.

When a number of agencies become involved with a child or family a 'Families First Assessment' (FFA) might take place. The purpose of this is to ensure that different agencies all work together in an effective and coordinated way to best support the child and family.

For further support for parents/carers of children and young people with SEND, including SEND Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS), please follow this link:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/services-for-parents-carers-and-families/services-for-parents-carers-and-families.aspx>

How Will You Help Me to Support My Child's Learning?

Class teachers are available to discuss your child's progress or any queries that you have about supporting your child's learning. There are formal opportunities to discuss this during parent consultations in the autumn and spring terms, or informally throughout the year. The SENDCo is also able to provide additional information specific to your child's needs and can put you in contact with additional support and courses if needed. We advertise many parent/carer training courses and groups through our school website and emails to parents/carers.

Home learning activities are differentiated according to the needs of the child. Our Home Learning policy provides more information about how you can support your child with their home learning.

How Does the School Enable Constructive Partnership Working with Families?

We work closely with parents/carers and welcome opportunities to discuss the provision in place for your child or any concerns you may have.

As well as informal meetings, we also hold Parent Consultations or Focussed Observations in the autumn and spring terms and provide an end of year report in the summer term. Children with SEND also have an additional Individual Learning Plan meeting or extended Parent Consultation

each term to review their current progress and collaboratively plan provision to move the child forward. Children with an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) will also have an Annual Review which involves the SENDCo, teachers, parents/carers and outside professionals working together to review progress and provision.

Where it is felt appropriate to refer a child to an external professional for further support, this will be discussed with parents and carried out with their consent. Parents/carers will be informed of any discussions and provision agreed with external professionals.

We have a number of pupil voice groups in which children can give their views and feedback on various aspects of the school community. These groups have representatives from different vulnerable groups, including children with SEND.

Our governing board play a key role in the development of the school SEND policy and Information Report. Parents/carers are also invited to share their views and ideas to develop our provision further.

How Will My Child Be Included in Activities Outside the Classroom Including School Trips?

At Applecroft School we strive to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all children. All pupils are welcome and included on school trips and activities outside of the classroom. All such activities are planned well in advance and any necessary adaptations are made and additional staff put in place if needed. Risk assessments are carried out to ensure that children are safe when they are on school trips. Individual risk assessments and risk management plans are used for specific children where appropriate.

How Accessible is the School Environment?

Applecroft School complies with the Equality Act (2010), carries out an accessibility plan every three years and makes reasonable adjustments as necessary.

In addition to physical adjustments such as ramps, disabled toilets and washing facilities and signage being appropriately placed for children to access, we also endeavour to ensure that the learning environment is accessible for all children to engage in their learning. This involves adjustments such as ear defenders used by individual children, safe spaces outside of the classroom environment, our nurture room 'The Den' and our sensory room.

Accessibility and Support for Parents/Carers

At Applecroft School, we want to ensure that all parents and carers can fully engage with their child's education and access the information and support they need. We recognise that some families may require additional support or alternative formats.

Translation Services

If English is not your first language and you would like support with translation or interpretation, please contact the school office on 01707 323758 or email admin@applecroft.herts.sch.uk. We can arrange:

- **Telephone interpretation** for meetings and conversations
- **Face-to-face interpretation** for important meetings such as ILP reviews or Annual Reviews
- **Translation of key documents** such as letters, reports or Individual Learning Plans

Please let us know which language you require support with and we will make the necessary arrangements. There is no charge for this service.

Accessible Formats

We can provide school documents and information in alternative formats to meet your needs. This includes:

- **Large print documents** - for parents/carers with visual impairments
- **Documents in different colours or on coloured paper** - to support reading difficulties
- **Audio versions** - key information can be provided in audio format
- **Easy Read versions** - simplified language and visual supports for key documents
- **Electronic formats** - documents can be emailed so you can use screen readers or other assistive technology

To request documents in an alternative format, please contact the school office or speak to your child's class teacher or the SENDCo. We will aim to provide these within 5 working days.

Support for Parents/Carers with Special Needs

We recognise that some parents and carers may themselves have special educational needs, disabilities, or additional support requirements. We want to ensure that you can fully participate in your child's education. Please let us know if you need:

- **Additional time** for meetings or to process information
- **Information provided in different ways** - for example, verbal explanations rather than written information, or vice versa
- **Support to attend meetings** - such as a support worker, advocate or family member
- **Adjustments to meeting locations** - such as a quieter room or a more accessible venue
- **Follow-up support** - such as written summaries after meetings or additional phone calls to clarify information
- **Help with completing forms** - we can offer support to help you complete paperwork

Please contact the SENDCo, Ms Ruth Johnson, or our Family Link Support Worker, Ms Jale Apicella, to discuss your needs. All requests will be treated sensitively and confidentially.

SEND Complaints Procedure

We hope that any concerns about SEND provision can be resolved through open communication with school staff. However, if you are not satisfied with the response you receive, we have a clear complaints escalation process.

Step 1: Speak to Your Child's Class Teacher

If you have a concern about your child's SEND provision, your first step should be to speak with your child's class teacher. They will:

- Listen to your concerns
- Explain the provision currently in place
- Discuss possible solutions or adjustments
- Arrange a follow-up meeting if needed

Step 2: Contact the SENDCo

If your concern is not resolved by the class teacher, or if you feel the issue requires specialist SEND expertise, contact the SENDCo, Ms Ruth Johnson:

- **Email:** senco@applecroft.herts.sch.uk
- **Phone:** 01707 323758 (via school office)

The SENDCo will:

- Review your child's provision and progress
- Meet with you to discuss your concerns in detail
- Investigate the issue thoroughly
- Propose a plan of action with clear timescales
- Follow up in writing to confirm what has been agreed

Step 3: Escalate to the Headteacher

If you remain dissatisfied after speaking with the SENDCo, you should contact the Headteacher, Mrs Lisa Withe:

- **Email:** head@applecroft.herts.sch.uk
- **Phone:** 01707 323758

The Headteacher will:

- Review all previous communications and actions taken
- Meet with you to understand your concerns
- Conduct an independent review of the SEND provision
- Provide a written response outlining the outcome and any further actions

Step 4: Contact the SEND Trustee or Chair of Trustees

If the issue remains unresolved, you can escalate your complaint to:

- **SEND Trustee:** Mrs Claire Coe
- **Chair of Trustees:** Louise Gardner

Contact via the school office or email: clerk@applecroft.herts.sch.uk

The trustee will:

- Review all documentation and correspondence
- Meet with you if appropriate
- Investigate whether school policies and procedures have been followed

- Provide a written response with recommendations

Step 5: Formal Complaint

If you are still not satisfied, you can make a formal complaint following the school's Complaints Policy, which is available on the school website. The formal complaints procedure includes:

- Submitting a written complaint to the Chair of Trustees
- A formal investigation by a complaints panel
- A hearing where you can present your case
- A final written decision

Full details of the formal complaints procedure can be found in our Complaints Policy on the school website.

External Support

At any stage of the complaints process, you can seek independent advice and support from:

SEND Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)

- Website:
<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/local-offer/services-for-parents-carers-and-families/send-information-advice-and-support-service.aspx>
- Phone: 01992 555847
- Email: sendiass@hertfordshire.gov.uk

SENDIASS provides free, confidential and impartial information, advice and support to parents and carers of children with SEND.

How Are the School's Resources Allocated and Matched to Children's Special Educational Needs?

The school budget includes a notional SEND budget which is allocated by the Headteacher, SENDCo and Trustees according to need.

Some additional funding can be applied for by the school to support individual children with exceptional needs and some (but not all) children with an EHC plan are assigned additional funding to help to meet their needs.

We also have funding targeted at specific groups such as Pupil Premium funding which allows staff to work specifically with these children to monitor and support their progress.

How Are Decisions Made About the Range of Support My Child Will Receive?

Following termly pupil progress meetings, the SENDCo, in consultation with teachers, will allocate provision according to need.

High quality teaching is our first wave of support for all children. Additional provision is monitored for impact and planned accordingly. Provision is discussed with parents/carers and

children at Individual Learning Plan meetings each term where progress is reviewed and parents and children are invited to share their views.

How Can I Find Out More Information About the Local Authority's Local Offer?

Information regarding the Hertfordshire Local Authority Offer can be found at:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer

Who Can I Contact for Further Information?

Parents/carers are encouraged to first of all speak to their child's class teacher if you would like to discuss anything about your child. They will then direct parents/carers to the appropriate person (e.g. SENDCo, Headteacher) if needed.

How Will the School Prepare and Support My Child to Join the School, Transfer to a New School or the Next Stage of Education and Life?

Our school works closely with all settings at the time of transition. At all stages, communication and information sharing is seen as crucial to ensure a smooth transition.

We arrange Home Visits for all children prior to joining our school Nursery or Reception Class and visits are made by key staff to other settings in the Early Years as appropriate. We hold Nursery and Reception Induction days to meet the EYFS staff and visit the setting.

There are internal transition meetings between each year group at the end of each academic year.

We work closely with local secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition for our Year 6 pupils in the summer term. This includes the children visiting their new secondary school as well as visits from Year 7 staff. For children, who may find transition to secondary school difficult, additional transition visits can be arranged and support can be offered to individual and small groups of children through the local DSPL outreach support to prepare children for this.

Information and documentation, such as Individual Learning Plans, Risk Management Plans etc. about individual children's SEND needs and support is provided to new class teachers/secondary schools to give them the best overview of the child. For some children with SEND, transition books are made to help them to prepare for the changes ahead.