The Federation of Fairfield and Colneis

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Dear Parents and Carers,

We would like to update you on the agreed ways to contact the school if you wish to discuss your child's special educational needs (SEND), raise concerns about their progress, or share worries about possible additional needs.

Our SENDCo
Miss Gooding is our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) and works across the Federation. As SENDCo, Miss Gooding:

- Works closely with parents, class teachers, and pupils to understand each child's strengths and needs
- Oversees the graduated approach to SEND support (Assess, Plan, Do, Review)
- Coordinates targeted interventions and specialist support
- Liaises with external professionals and agencies, making referrals when needed
- Ensures that appropriate support, strategies, and resources are in place in the classroom
- Provides advice, training, and guidance to staff to support inclusive practice

Miss Gooding works closely with our Inclusion Team to ensure that support for pupils with additional needs is well planned, appropriate, and effective.

The SENDCo Role and Current Context
The SENDCo role is large and varied. Alongside meeting statutory deadlines, managing referrals, preparing documentation, and working with external professionals, the role also involves significant day-to-day, on-the-ground support in school. This includes working directly with staff and pupils, responding to emerging needs, and supporting inclusive classroom practice.

Nationally and locally, SEND services are under increasing pressure. Many external agencies are overstretched, resulting in longer waiting times and higher thresholds for support. Writing referrals, managing Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and attending multi-agency meetings is increasingly time-consuming and significantly reduces the time available for direct work in classrooms.

Across the Federation, 23% of pupils are currently receiving additional support at SEND Monitoring or SEND Support level. In response, we are introducing new systems to strengthen our SEND offer and improve consistency and efficiency. These developments are necessary and positive; however, they take time to embed effectively. During this period, we ask for your understanding as we prioritise sustainable, high-quality support for all children.

Contacting the School About SEND Concerns
Your child's class teacher must always be the first point of contact. They know your child best and are often able to address concerns, implement reasonable adjustments, or provide reassurance without delay. If further input is required, the class teacher will make an internal referral to the SENDCo.

Parents and carers may also contact the school office. The office team has been provided with a triage guide by the SENDCo and will take a brief overview of your concern before directing it to the most appropriate member of staff. This ensures that queries are managed efficiently and responded to by the person best placed to help.

Due to the volume and complexity of SEND-related work, the SENDCo is not able to respond to all queries within a 48-hour timeframe. An automatic acknowledgement may be issued within this period; however, this does not indicate that the concern has been reviewed or actioned. Please note the following expectations:

- Same-day responses cannot be guaranteed.
- SEND-related emails and phone calls will be responded to within 10 working days.
- Responses may come from a member of the Inclusion Team rather than the SENDCo directly.

If you believe a matter is urgent, you should contact your child's class teacher or the school office, who will determine the most appropriate course of action.

Our Inclusion and Pastoral Teams
Our Inclusion Team works collaboratively to support pupils' academic, social, and emotional needs. Attached is an overview of this team for your information.

Using the School Website for Information and Signposting
Parents and carers are expected to make use of the of the school website, which has regularly updated and should be your first point of reference. This section includes:

- An overview of SEND provision across the Federation
- Links to local and national services
- Resources to support learning and wellbeing at home

Referral Timeframes
All referrals to external agencies must meet strict criteria and require detailed evidence of the graduated response, including records of interventions and their impact. This process takes time and cannot be expedited without appropriate evidence.

Indicative preparation times and current external waiting periods are outlined below (please note these are approximate and outside of the school's control):

Referral Route	**School Preparation Guideline**	**Current Service Wait Time (Approx.)**
Education, Health & Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA)	1 term (12 weeks)	5–12 months
NDD Pathway (ASD/ADHD assessments)	1 term (12 weeks)	3–4 years
Right to Choose Pathway (ASD/ADHD via GP)	GP referral only	12-18 months
School Nursing Team	½ term (6 weeks) or parents can self-refer	18 weeks
Primary Mental Health Worker Consultation	Consultations are offered by the service one termly	9-12 months
Emotional Wellbeing Hub	½ term (6 weeks) or parents can self-refer	2–4 months
Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT)	1 term (12 weeks)	18 weeks
Occupational Therapy (OT)	1 term (12 weeks)	18 weeks
Specialist Education Services (SES)	1 term (12 weeks)	12-18 weeks

Working Together
Supporting children with SEND is most effective when we work in partnership. Following agreed communication pathways and using the website for information and signposting allows us to manage support fairly, consistently, and effectively for all families.

Thank you for your continued understanding and cooperation.

Kind regards,

Mr Girling
Executive Headteacher