

Reading Families' Forum

A voice for families of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

COFFEE AFTERNOON 16th November 2022 via Zoom

Aimee Trimmer, Early Years SEND Team Manager, and Tanya Spiers from Dingley's Promise joined 3 parent carers. Fran Morgan and Ramona Bridgman were present from Reading Families' Forum. We discussed transitions to primary school for children with additional needs.

Portage can support children under 5 with possible additional needs. There is a long waiting list for individual support but there are group sessions at children's centres <https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/BFfC-Portage-Service-Leaflet-V1.pdf>

There are Early Years Support Workers from Aimee's team who can observe a child at an early years setting and provide advice and support – ask your child's setting about this. Tanya can also offer support to any family who has a child under 5 with additional needs [Reading – Dingley's Promise](#).

Please see attached slides for details of how to support a child with additional needs moving to primary school, including seeking a school place.

If a family want to offset a child's start at primary school - so that they start Reception in Sept 24 not Sept 23, this must be agreed by the Local Authority and schools won't be able to guarantee a place will be kept open. Aimee recommends talking to your child's early years setting and the primary school you hope your child will attend first.

Mainstream primary schools are expected to support most children with additional needs. This might not be individual support but could be group learning or time doing a sensory circuit with others.

Resource units and special schools require an Education, Health and Care Plan. Resource units are based in mainstream schools with small classes. The child spends time in the unit and the rest of the school, the amount of time in each depends on the unit and the child.

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Questions:

1. How long is an assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan? – The assessment should take no more than 20 weeks from the initial request for an assessment.
2. Do you need a diagnosis to be considered for a resource unit like Christ the King? Aimee will check. [How to apply | Christ The King Catholic Primary School \(christthekingreading.co.uk\)](https://christthekingreading.co.uk)
3. What if the school you want for your child is in a different Local Authority? All Local Authorities have to follow the same SEND code of practice although the processes may be different. Reading do place some children in neighbouring Local Authority schools, if needed.
4. Can a parent choose to home school their child? Yes, but you must contact the Local Authority first [Elective home education - Brighter Futures For Children](#)

Remember to apply for a school place unless your child has had a finalised Education, Health and Care Plan. [School admissions - Brighter Futures For Children](#)

Do look at all the possible schools for your child before selecting a preference. There is an appeals process for school admissions and regarding Education, Health and Care Plan <https://bit.ly/3GanEUz>

You can contact the Reading Information, Advice and Support Service for support at any time [Home - Reading Information, Advice and Support for SEND \(readingiass.org\)](https://readingiass.org)

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