

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PRESCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Services are determined by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team based on your child's individual needs. The IEP Team consists of the parent and appropriate professionals.

Preschool special education services are based on the Individualized Education Program that is written for each child. Goals are written according to individual child needs. Any related services that the child receives are designed to support the educational goals. The IEP determines the frequency, duration, and location of services based on the child's needs. Preschool children with disabilities are served in a variety of settings and natural environments which may include home, child care centers, private child care homes, Head Start, NC Pre-K, MECK Pre-K, private preschool programs, designated preschool speech therapy sites, and public school classrooms.

SPEECH PRIMARY SERVICES

Children who are identified with the eligibility of Speech-Language Impairment are served by a Preschool Speech-Language Pathologist, typically at one of the preschool speech therapy sites located in various Charlotte-Mecklenburg elementary schools. Services may also be provided in the child's natural setting, depending on the needs determined by the IEP team. Children are often paired with another child or in a small group to facilitate communication among peers.

ITINERANT SERVICES

Itinerant special education services are provided by a licensed Birth-Kindergarten (B-K) teacher and are designed to support inclusive practices within the child's preschool, childcare, or home. Instruction incorporates the routines and activities of the child's environment, while focusing on the individual needs and goals of the child. Some children receive their services in a small group setting located within selected Charlotte-Mecklenburg elementary schools, facilitated by itinerant teaching staff. Instruction in these groups follows a framework of best practices for young children with developmental needs. Children receiving related services (Speech-Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy) will be scheduled by the therapist providing that service with input from the family. Those therapies may be provided in the child's natural setting or at a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) site, depending on the needs determined by the IEP team.

SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS

Our full-day separate programs are designed using a developmental approach to teaching and learning. Instruction is provided by a licensed BK teacher. Days of attendance and special education services are determined by the child's goals, services, and location of services indicated in the IEP. Classes use systematic and structured methods and techniques. Some programs are designed to serve only children with special needs in a lower teacher to student ratio and are located at select Charlotte-Mecklenburg elementary schools. Other programs serve only children with special needs within Charlotte-Mecklenburg's separate school. Related services are sometimes required to support the special education needs of a child and are delivered during the school day. The classroom teacher and related service staff may use an integrated approach to address the goals for the child.

Children who are 4 by August 31 of the current school year and who have been identified through a screening and selection process may be eligible to participate in a full day program 5 days per week within select Charlotte-Mecklenburg elementary schools. The program is designed to provide a child-centered, literacy focused curriculum to prepare children for success in Kindergarten and beyond. This program offers inclusive educational classrooms and opportunities, with special education services being delivered according to the child's IEP. Instruction is provided by a licensed BK teacher and embedded into the teaching and learning throughout the school day. Related services are sometimes required to support the special education needs of a child and are delivered during the school day. While eligibility for the program itself is not an IEP team decision, participation in this preschool setting can influence the identified special education programming needed to support a child. If a child is found eligible for this program, an IEP team must convene to determine if services can be provided within the learning environment.