

A Parent's Guide to Preschool Special Education in Carmel NY



Carmel Central School District
Committee On Preschool Special Education
(CPSE)
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Patterson, NY 12563
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Dear Parents:

This handbook is a quick reference guide designed to help you understand preschool special education for children ages 3 to 5. If you have concerns about your preschool child's development including social emotional skills, learning, speech or language skills, motor skills or the ability to use appropriate behavior to meet their needs, this resource will provide you with the information you need regarding the CPSE process and possible special education services for your child.

Preschool Special Education at a Glance



1. Referral

As the parent of a preschool aged child, who is 3-5 years old and not yet attending Kindergarten, you can make a written referral directly to the Carmel Central School District's Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) by using the contact information at the beginning of this handbook. Your referral should include child's name, date of birth and your concerns. If you need guidance about how to make a referral, we can assist you by calling 845-878-2094 x243. Referrals can also be made as part of the transition process if your child is currently receiving services through Early Intervention (birth-3 year old children).

Upon receiving the referral, we will send you a packet containing the following:

- A registration packet with directions for completion

Once your child is registered, we will send you the following:

- A Consent Form
- A list of evaluation sites
- Procedural Safeguards
- A Script if OT or PT evaluations are needed

2. Evaluation

The CPSE Chairperson notifies the chosen evaluation agency and a free, multidisciplinary evaluation for the child will be scheduled. The evaluation may take place at your home, your child's school/daycare or at the evaluation site, depending on your preference and the agency's availability. Evaluations may include two or more of the following depending on your concerns:

- Social History (your family and child's prenatal, health, developmental and school history)
- Psychological (Evaluates your child's thinking, social/emotional, and self-care skills)
- Educational (Evaluates your child's early learning and play skills)
- Speech/Language (Evaluates your child's ability to understand and use language)
- Occupational Therapy (Evaluates your child's fine motor and sensory motor development)
- Physical Therapy (Evaluates your child's gross motor development)

3. CPSE Meeting

After the evaluations are complete, reports will be written and sent to you and the CPSE office by the evaluation agency. The CPSE Committee will then meet with you to discuss your concerns and evaluation results and to determine whether your child is eligible for Preschool Special Education Services. If eligible, we will discuss appropriate services for your child. You can bring anyone you choose with you to the meeting. At this meeting, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed by you and the team. This plan documents the participants, discussion, and the goals and services recommended for your child. The plan will also say how and when the service providers will communicate with you.

4. Services Provided

After the initial meeting, and if eligible, the CPSE department will contact agencies requesting services and/or programs for your child. Services can be provided at home, in school or at a facility, depending on the CPSE recommendation and your child's needs. Service providers will contact you to arrange services and to give you their contact information. Within 60 school days after the school district receives your signed consent your child should begin to receive the services agreed upon. Putnam County arranges transportation for your child if a program is recommended and it is identified as part of their IEP.



Who is Eligible For Services?



Eligibility for CPSE is:

- Based on individual evaluations in your child's native language
- Determined by multidisciplinary team
- Dependent on emerging patterns of strengths and needs from multiple sources of information

Extent of Delay warranting possible intervention:

- A 12 month delay in one or more functional areas; or
- A 33% delay in one functional area; or
- A 25% delay in each of two functional areas; or

A preschool student with a disability is a preschool child who, because of mental, physical, or emotional reasons, has been identified as having a significant delay as described above in one or more areas of development and can receive appropriate educational opportunities from special programs and services approved by the Department of Education. Eligibility is determined by the Committee on Preschool Special Education.

Preparing For the Meeting



Before your child's CPSE meeting, think about your answers to the questions below. All of these issues can and should be considered at the CPSE meeting. Your views and priorities for your child are important and should help guide the meeting!

- What are your concerns regarding your child's development?
- What are your child's strengths?
- What methods have you found to be effective in supporting your child's growth and development?
- How well does your child interact with other children their age?
- How well does your child use language to communicate?
- How well does your child understand new directions or new concepts?
- Does your child follow routines and rules?
- How well is your child able to care for himself/herself as compared with other children his/her age?

You should leave the meeting with a clear understanding of:

- Your child's strengths and needs
- The services your child qualifies for
- Where and how often the services will occur
- The goals that will be worked on for the school year
- The methods and services that will be used to reach these goals
- How the teacher/therapists will keep you informed about your child's progress

If you disagree with any recommendations that have been made, identify the recommendation and talk about it at the meeting. If you and the other members of the committee don't reach agreement after talking the issue through, ask to meet again. It may also be helpful to put your concerns in writing to the Chairperson.

During the Meeting



The laws about Preschool Special Education identify parents as members of the CPSE. The Committee on Preschool Special Education is responsible for creating the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) which is designed to identify the programs and services to meet your child's educational needs. Your child's IEP is developed by a **team** that includes or may include:

- You
- A representative from the district (Chairperson)
- A Psychologist
- Other persons having knowledge of your child, including current teachers or service providers
- A representative from the evaluation agency who can interpret the evaluation results
- A representative from the county
- A representative from Early Intervention (if child is receiving EI services)

That is quite a crowd! To help you feel part of the team your district will:

- Give you at least a 5-day notice about where and when the meeting will be held
- Let you know what will be discussed at the meeting
- Let you know who will be attending the meeting
- Reschedule the meeting if it is inconvenient for you to attend (let them know as soon as possible)
- Provide copies of reports
- Come to the meeting prepared with knowledge and information about your child that will guide the team in determining and developing the IEP.



Your Role after the Meeting

When you leave the CPSE meeting make sure you understand the evaluation findings, needs, services and recommendations that have been made for your child.

After the IEP is developed, there are some things you can do to make sure it is working well:

- Get to know your child's service provider-you can share information about things that are working and identify challenges that your child may have.
- Ask your service providers how you can support your child's progress at home. Ask for a home program with written suggestions.
- Have regular conferences or other agreed upon ways to communicate with your service providers. The methods of informing you about your child's progress are required to be part of the IEP. You might use notebooks, phone calls or meetings.
- Observe and listen to your child and report progress or lack of progress to your services provider and/or CPSE Chairperson.
- Share information with all team members that you think will impact your child.
- A final important thing to remember about any plan is that it must be reviewed regularly to make sure that it matches your child's strengths and needs.
- Remember that you drive this process. Even if you feel nervous...speak up, ask questions, and share your opinions about your child.

Remember, you and your school district are all a part of your child's team. We are working together to achieve a common goal...Your child's success!