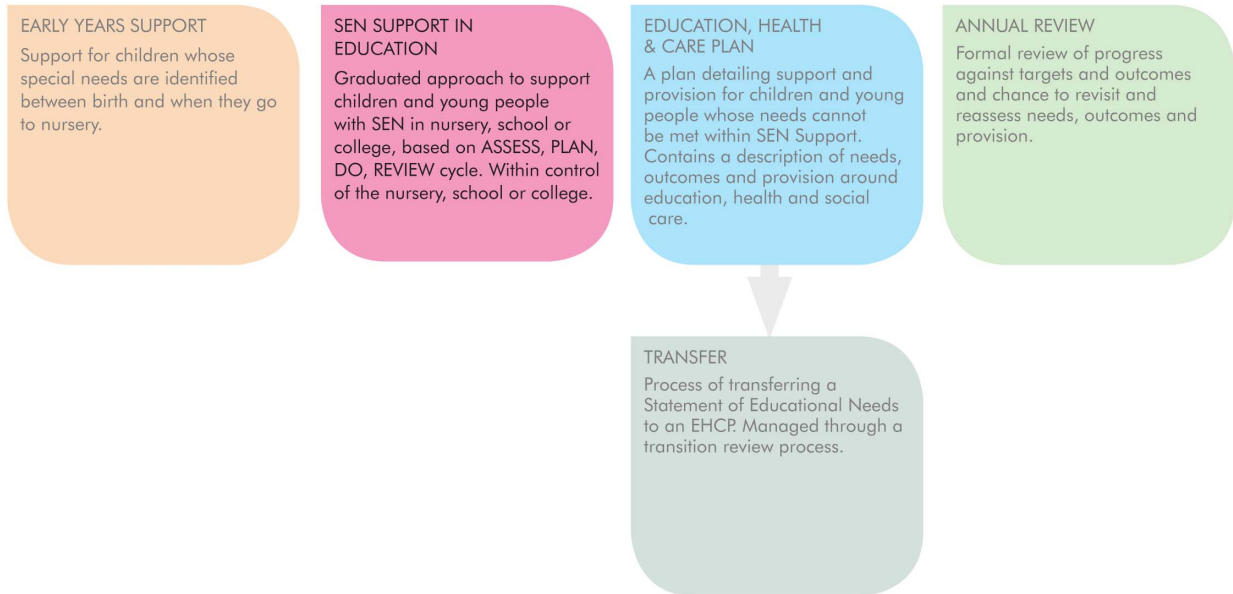


# SEN SUPPORT

## What is SEN support?



The majority of children with special educational needs will be supported in their usual educational setting with interventions provided by that setting. This support is known as SEN Support, and early years settings, schools and colleges all receive financial resources to provide support children with SEN.

The SEND Code of Practice Paragraph 6.44 states that "Where a pupil is identified as having SEN, schools should take action to remove barriers to learning and put effective special educational provision in place. This SEN support should take the form of a four part cycle through which earlier decisions and actions are revisited, refined and revised with a growing understanding of the pupil's needs and what supports the pupil in making good progress and securing good outcomes. This is known as the graduated approach"

In short, every pupil who has been identified as having SEN should have their **needs** identified, their desired **outcomes** agreed and **provision** made that will enable the child to reach these outcomes. The child's progress should be **reviewed** regularly. This is a four step cycle known as **assess, plan, do, review** or the graduated approach.

The graduated approach starts in the classroom. Teachers are continually assessing, planning, implementing and reviewing their approach to teaching all children. However, where a possible special educational need has been identified, this process becomes increasingly personalised and intensive.

The responsibility and accountability for the progress of pupils with SEN lies with the class or subject teacher.

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## The format for the SEN support plan

Each school (or other educational setting) may define its own version of an SEN support plan, to meet its own needs. However a group of local SENCOs have done some work in this area and provided some suggested templates which schools are free to use or to adapt. This process is not about the paperwork. The focus should be on properly identifying and responding to a child's needs. If a school does develop its own approach to SEN support planning then they should record:

**Child profile:** A brief profile of the child, including strengths, needs and what works or doesn't work. This might include information from other professionals but would usually be from information given by the child's teachers. This covers the requirement to assess the child demanded by the code of practice.

**Outcomes:** The outcomes that the child, their teachers and parents aim to achieve through the SEN support. The outcomes should match the needs identified in the child's profile. For more details on writing good outcomes see the appendices.

**Targets:** These are steps to be achieved over the next half term to one term on the way towards the outcomes. They should be SMART and agreed with parents and the child.

**Provision:** Here the school should describe what provision will be put in place to help the child meet their targets and work towards their outcomes. This could include changing the classroom environment, teaching methods or the curriculum. It could include small group or one-to-one work. It could also be details of interventions led by additional professionals (eg speech and language therapists) or interventions specified by professionals and delivered by school staff.

**Review:** Regular reviews of the child's progress against the agreed targets and outcomes should be recorded making it clear what interventions and strategies have worked and what did not. The review should help to make plan the next set of targets and improve the support available to the child.

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## SEN support process overview



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## SEN support planning – Step-by-step

### 1. Assess

Assessments are made so that the teacher(s), the family and/or young person and the SENCo have a good understanding of the child's strengths and needs.

Teachers continually assess pupils to make sure that they are making progress. They will assess in many different ways, for instance through observing how the child responds in the classroom, using formal tests and comparing progress with other children of the same age. If a pupil is not making enough progress with the normal teaching in class the teachers might consider putting an SEN support plan in place. They should talk to the parents about their concerns and about the plan.

Sometimes a parent may be concerned that a child is not making enough progress in learning, or has concerns about behaviour or social difficulties, or the child may have been given a diagnosis that means the child might need additional support. The parent should talk to the child's teacher(s) about their concerns and the possibility of putting in place an SEN support plan.

The SENCo might join the discussion with parents and teachers to offer support and advice. The teacher and parent should discuss any concerns that they have about the child. By the end of the discussion there should be agreement on whether or not the child needs an SEN support plan.

If the decision is that the child does not need SEN support, the teacher will continue to assess the pupil's progress and adjust her teaching. If the pupil does not make progress after this then the school should reconsider making an SEN support plan.

If the parent disagrees with a school's decision about whether or not to put in place SEN support, they can raise their concerns through the school's complaints procedure. This complaints procedure should be on the school website.

### 2. Plan

The plan should set out the outcomes that everyone agrees would be useful for the child and say how the school and family will work with the child to help them achieve their outcomes. The plan will also set a date for everyone involved to review how well the child is progressing towards their outcomes. If other professionals have been involved their advice will be included in the plan.

The SEN Code of Practice States that "where it is decided to provide a pupil with SEN support, the parents **must** be formally notified, although parents should have already been involved in forming the assessment of needs as outlined above. The teacher and the SENCo should agree in consultation with the parent and the pupil the adjustments, interventions and support to be put in place, as well as the expected impact on progress, development or behaviour, along with a clear date for review."

For most children the support will be to help them learn, making changes to the curriculum and learning and teaching approaches. Often children will have time in a small group or one-to-one, working on things they find difficult, for instance literacy skills.

#### **Involvement of additional professionals**

At times, it can be useful for a school to request support and involvement from external professionals. There are a range of professionals from whom they are able to request involvement in order to further aid their understanding of pupil's needs and to help them develop their practice, interventions and support strategies. Schools must have parental permission (and/or permission from the young person if aged 16+) to make a referral or seek external advice. These professionals will often give verbal advice to the school and parents and might write a short report which parents have a right to see. Each service or professional group have their own ways of working with a school. More detail is provided below.

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## Educational Psychology Service

All local authority maintained schools and academies in Kingston and Richmond have an allocation of educational psychology time and an allocated educational psychologist (EP). The majority of schools across both boroughs also purchase additional time from the AfC Educational Psychology Service. The primary aim of the EP is to support schools in the work that they do by applying psychology to assist in better understanding the psychological processes (eg, cognitive, learning, social, emotional, behavioural, physical or sensory) which affect children's or young people's development and education. EPs work with teaching staff, parents, pupils and other professionals to generate solutions to address concerns and to help bring about change. The EPs work as a resource for schools for all children, promoting psychological well-being, inclusion and raising standards across the full range of age and abilities. See the end of this section for more information on how the Educational Psychology Service supports schools and pupils with SEN.

## Speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy

Therapists may provide ongoing advice and training to schools as required. If the child is referred to the service, the therapist will work closely with teaching staff to design programmed of work that can be delivered and integrated into the school day. Children may receive one-to-one sessions depending on their presenting difficulties. Speech and language therapists will also hold meetings with the school to discuss individual children, review progress and discuss alternative programmes of work and strategies to implement. The therapy services have their own referral criteria, which pupils would need to meet to be assessed by the service. Services are not always available across all age ranges (eg, therapies are not commissioned to work with young people post-16 in mainstream schools).

All provision specified by additional professionals must be documented in the SEN support plan, linked to the identified needs, and include targets and outcomes. Any professional's written report should clearly articulate: needs, outcomes, and provision.

## 3. Do

This is simply the stage when the school, family and child get on with doing what they have planned to do. While this 'doing' is going on, the child's response to the new approaches will be monitored to see if the plan is working.

The SEND Code of Practice (2014) emphasises that the child's teachers have day-to-day responsibility for the learning and progress of all pupils, even when there are interventions that involve one-to-one teaching or group work away from the main classroom.

## 4. Review

The purpose of the review is to talk about how well the plan has worked and what changes might need to be made to make it more effective. Progress towards the agreed outcomes must be discussed. There are three possible decisions to be made at a review.

- The child might have made enough progress and no longer needs SEN support.
- The child might have made some progress but continue to need SEN support.
- The child might be experiencing significant difficulties despite lots of SEN support and may need to have an EHCP needs assessment (see Section 4 on EHCPs).

The school is responsible for arranging the review, usually held once each term. Most of the time the review will be a discussion between the teacher, the parents and the pupil; sometimes the SENCo will come to a review to offer advice and support. Other professionals may occasionally attend or give advice or a report in advance if pupils have a high level of need or complex needs. Sometimes the discussion might be done over the telephone.

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At the review the following should be discussed.

- What progress has been made towards the agreed outcomes?
- Are there any new skills the child has learnt transferred back into class-work? Has their independence increased?
- What are the views of, parents, pupil, support staff, teachers and other professionals? What has worked, what has not worked?
- What further changes to support, provision and outcomes are needed?

If the child continues to need SEN support then following the meeting the teacher or SENCo should update the SEN Support plan and implement any changes that have been agreed.

The review meeting is also an appropriate time to celebrate success. If a child is making improved progress this should be recognised. If the SEN support has been successful the child might no longer need SEN support.

## Additional information about the Educational Psychology Service

Face's EPs operate a consultation model of service delivery that promotes early intervention to minimise pupil barriers to learning. This means that they support schools most effectively as facilitators and consultants, working collaboratively with people who know the child or young person best. They engage in focused, collaborative discussion to jointly identify concerns and create solutions.

A consultation meeting provides a framework for assessment and intervention and is about jointly investigating, planning, solution-building, delivering interventions and evaluating and reviewing. Consultation usually takes place at two levels: (1) initial consultation, whereby relevant school staff meet and discuss with the EP concerns or issues to generate evidence-based interventions and strategies; and (2) follow-up consultation (takes place four to six weeks after the initial consultation to allow for a period of implementation of ideas, strategic intervention and/or further exploration) in order to further discuss the situation and work towards solutions.

Consultation is an indirect model of working in that EPs work with school staff and parents to develop understanding, strategies and interventions. Sometimes during consultation the EP identifies that there are gaps in knowledge or understanding which means that direct involvement with a child or young person by the EP would be beneficial. Direct involvement might take many forms, for example, observation in class or at play, and direct work with a child or young person to explore learning, map a child or young person's cognitive profile or conduct an assessment of a particular area of cognition or functioning.

EPs are happy to meet with parents or carers at any point of their involvement and to discuss the way that they work. However, they do not generally provide written records for parents of consultation work although the school will often minute consultation meetings and these notes may be made available to parents or carers. EPs will generally only document their involvement with a child or young person in a report detailing their understanding of their needs and the support or provision required to meet these when there has been EP involvement over time (two terms would be normally be a minimum) and when there is a need for this information to be conveyed to others beyond the school environment (eg, when a school requests a needs assessment for an EHCP).

EPs have termly planning meetings with all their allocated schools to discuss the school's needs and pupils who have SEN support plans or EHCPs (or statements) or that the school has concerns about. At these meetings they will make recommendations relating to interventions, strategies and provision and they will also plan EP input for the term. It is a school's responsibility to prioritise their needs, thinking about how best to make use of the time and resources they receive.

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## What can you expect from a school or college?

### Reasonable Adjustments

For children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability (SEND), attending school or college can present additional challenges, such as getting around the school, using the equipment, and being equal to their peers. Children with SEND may also find speech and communication or remembering and learning more difficult than other children. This is termed "accessibility" and a school can make **reasonable adjustments** to make things easier.

Accessibility means different things to different people. It could be about ramps for a wheelchair, a classroom on the ground floor, brightly coloured strips on steps and stairs, a quiet route to a classroom, alternative teaching methods or resources or perhaps sports day activities that include everyone equally.

Educational settings have to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils by law, as defined in the Equalities Act 2010. The duty is:

"To take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the substantial disadvantage to a disabled person caused by a provision, measure or practice applied by or on behalf of a school, or by the absence of a supportive aid or service."

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as having a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

More information on reasonable adjustments, including some real life examples are available through the Local Offer or the SEND Family Voices website in the form of a booklet and a video titled "I just want to be like everyone else"

### Provision at SEN Support – What might this look like?

All teachers should be able to adapt their teaching methods to reflect a range of abilities and learning styles. This is known as "quality first teaching" and it is reasonable to expect that a teacher may differentiate the curriculum in some way for a child with SEN. If the child needs more than this then the SEN Support plan should describe the additional provision that the he or she needs. This should be individualised to meet the child's personal needs and help them meet their defined outcomes and can therefore take many forms. Some examples of provision that children may receive at SEN support level include:

- Extra equipment (eg sensory toys)
- Advice to the school from professionals (eg speech and language therapist)
- Small group work (eg handwriting classes)
- Some support during the school day (eg at play or lunchtime)
- Training for classroom teachers or other staff (eg on teaching a child with autism)
- Mentoring or supported social opportunities (eg minecraft or lego lunchtime club)
- Staggered lunchtime break to avoid busy times
- Differentiated homework (eg using a computer to create a poster rather than having to draw one)

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- Advice on alternative curriculum in (secondary) schools where alternatives to GCSEs are offered (this might include working with a local college)
- Defined communication arrangements between home and school (eg home / school book or regular informal meetings)

There are many more possibilities, however the key thing is that the needs of the child must be assessed and suitable provision defined in the SEN support plan. The school then has a duty to deliver the provision specified in the plan, in whatever form it takes. The school is expected to act on advice from other professionals such as speech and language therapists, CAMHS professionals or occupational therapists. The SENCo at the school is key in ensuring that the plans are created, implemented and monitored. However it is the classroom teacher(s) not the SENCo or teaching assistant that are primarily responsible for teaching the child and helping them to make progress towards their outcomes.

## Threshold Guidance

This is a document produced by Achieving for Children (in collaboration with schools) which describes the types of needs that may require provision at SEN Support (or an EHCP) and specifies the types of provision that a school could be expected to provide. There is a link to the Threshold Guidance in the appendices

## Funding for schools to provide SEN Support / EHC Plans

Schools receive additional budget from central government to enable them to fund support for children with SEND. The funding of pupils in schools is divided into three elements:

**Element 1** is the standard per pupil amount and is awarded for each pupil on the school's roll. This funding is received for all pupils, whether they have SEND or not.

**Element 2** is an additional amount of funding aimed to support children with SEND up to a nominal amount of £6000 per pupil. The budget for a particular school is **not** determined based on the actual number of children who have SEND, but is based on an annual formula set by the Department for Education. Most children's needs can be met with considerably less than £6000 per year (and in fact there is considerably less money in the budget than £6000 per pupil with SEN). Heads and Governors are free to make decisions about how the notional SEN budget is used within a school, it is not "ring-fenced", however the schools should be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their SEN provision. In practice the actual amount spent per pupil with SEND will be defined by the school according to the needs of the child and the provision that the school deems most appropriate in meeting those needs). It is really important that schools can evidence how the SEN Support has been used effectively and the impact on a child and their provision and progress. This information will be important if the school or family decide that the child needs to be assessed for an EHC Plan because the Local Authority will need to understand why top up funding may be required for that child over and above the notional school budget in order to proceed with an EHCP Needs Assessment.

**Element 3** is a top up element administered by the Local Authority (Achieving for Children) to a mainstream school based on what is specified in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). The Local Authority, as a top up, will pay any provision specified in the plan in excess of £6000 per year. The first £6000 of the plan must be funded by the school from their Element 2 funding.

## Special Resourced Provision (SRP) / Enhanced Specialist Teaching Arrangement

Pupils in a specialist provision that is part of a mainstream school or nursery are funded slightly differently. These places are resourced and funded so that they can meet the needs of the children that attend and therefore normally no additional top up funding is required. Special schools are funded on a similar basis.



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**Example 1:** A child receives SEN Support in the form of small group literacy sessions and some equipment to help with writing (eg writing slope and pencil grips). This costs the school £2500 per year and is paid for by the school from their notional SEN Budget (Elements 1 & 2).

**Example 2:** A pupil has an EHCP for £11,000. The first £6000 must be funded by the school from the school's notional SEN budget. The balance of £5000 will be paid by Achieving for Children (AfC) via Element 3 top up from the SEN budget.

**Example 3:** A child who needs significant support in class arrives at school without an EHC Plan. The school should apply for an EHCP to gain access to top up funding but must use their own funding to support the child in the interim

These funding rules apply regardless of whether the school is maintained or an academy.

# SEN SUPPORT

## SEN support - Who does what?

### Educational setting's role

- Continuously monitor progress to identify children who may have SEN
- Write an SEN Support plan for children with SEN
- Review SEN support every term, with parents and children
- Ensure that appropriate professionals are involved in the process
- Ensure that progress against outcomes is regularly documented in the SEN support plan

### Guidance for parents, carers and young people

- If you have any concerns that your child may have SEN you should discuss this with the teachers
- Ensure that the SENCo is informed of any professionals involved with your child whether private, NHS or local authority
- Ensure that you have seen and understood your or your child's SEN support plan and you understand what role you play in it
- Attend review meetings and give your views on progress and provision

### SEN Team role

### Other professionals

- Provide input, advice and guidance to teachers and SENCos on provision, interventions and strategies that should be included in SEN support plans. This could be through termly meetings to discuss provision at the school (or other educational establishment) in general or through requests to provide individual input
- Provide assessment and advice on outcomes and provision for individual child or young person when required
- Any reports should contain clear statements of:
  - **Needs** of the child or young person
  - **Outcomes and Targets** that the child or young person should be working towards
  - **Provision** that will enable the child or young person to work towards those outcomes and targets