

The Graduated Approach



Graduated approach: A model of action and intervention in early education settings, schools and colleges to help children and young people who have special educational needs. The approach recognises that there is a continuum of special educational needs and that, where necessary, increasing specialist expertise should be brought to bear on the difficulties that a child or young person may be experiencing.

Schools should assess each pupil's current skills and levels of attainment on entry and regular further assessments should take place. These should seek to identify pupils making less than expected progress. Four "broad areas of need" are identified with detail given in relation to each area and the expectation is that schools will plan for these and ensure that their staff have relevant training and are equipped to respond.

The Four Broad Areas of Need:

- communication and interaction
- cognition and learning
- social, emotional and mental health
- sensory and/or physical needs

Where it is decided that a pupil does have SEN, the decision should be recorded in the school records and the pupil's parents **must** be formally informed that special educational provision is being made. Arrangements for appropriate support should be made through the school's approach to SEN support.

As with early years' settings, special educational provision in schools is called "**SEN Support**" and the cycle of **Assess, Plan, Do** and **Review** is set out in more detail in the Code. (See additional handout "Assess, Plan, Do and Review process").

Where a pupil is receiving SEN Support, schools should talk to parents regularly, to set clear outcomes and review progress towards them.

Schools should meet parents at least three times each year. A record of the outcomes, action and support agreed through the discussion should be kept and shared with all the appropriate school staff. This record should be given to the pupil's parents.

It is for schools to determine their own approach to record keeping but the provision made for pupils with SEN should be recorded accurately and kept up to date. The school should readily share this information with parents and provide it in a format that is accessible. Schools **must** provide an annual report to parents on their child's progress.

Schools may involve specialists at any point to advise them on early identification of SEN and effective support and interventions. A school should always involve a specialist where a pupil continues to make little or no progress or where they continue to work at levels substantially below those expected of pupils of a similar age despite evidence-based SEN support delivered by appropriately trained staff. The pupil's parents should always be involved in any decision to involve specialists.

Where, despite the school having taken relevant and purposeful action to identify, assess and meet the SEN of the child or young person, the child or young person has not made expected progress, the school or parents should consider requesting an Education, Health and Care needs assessment. To inform its decision the local authority will expect to see evidence of the action taken by the school as part of SEN support.

